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Sincerely,

Anna Groff

Interim Editor
The Mennonite

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THE MENNONITE

OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST

98:1 JANUARY 4, 1983

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Another New Year has come to us.
It can be a space to fear
or a time to steward.

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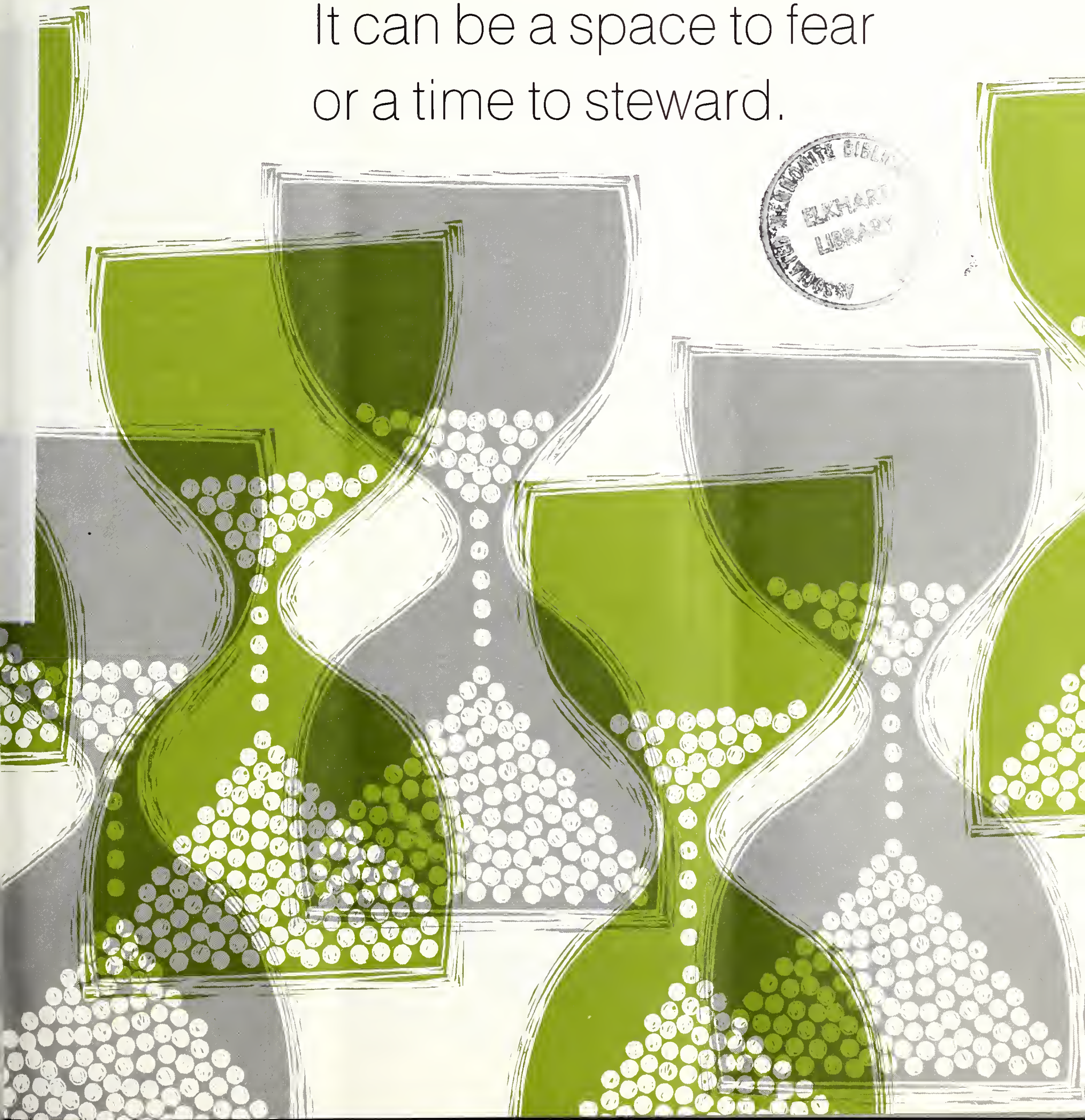


Her New Year's resolution s

Karren Boehr

It was a bitterly cold day . . . but then, Januarys were always cold.

Hunching over a small bowl of vegetable soup, she wearily cupped her hands over the rising steam, then painfully began working out the numbing stiffness in her long, slender fingers. From time to time, her dark eyes rose and she cautiously glanced about. He was still nowhere to be seen. Perhaps the delay would give her time to eat her lunch.

It had been a year since she had frequented the busy cafeteria. Known for its cheap food and fast service, it was filled consistently with secretaries, executives and sales clerks — whoever managed to find work in the hub of towering office complexes. Up-to-date wicker now replaced the once-familiar, tattered vinyl chairs. The color scheme had pleasantly shifted from grimy orange to soft hues of browns and tans. Even the express lane had been automated and moved to a more convenient spot along the wall.

Removing her new suede jacket, for which she had scrimped and saved far too long, she carefully draped it over the back of the chair beside her. Though she had picked a small, rather obscure table in a back corner, she knew any untaken place would soon be at a premium. Her jacket would ward off any unwelcome intruders until he arrived.

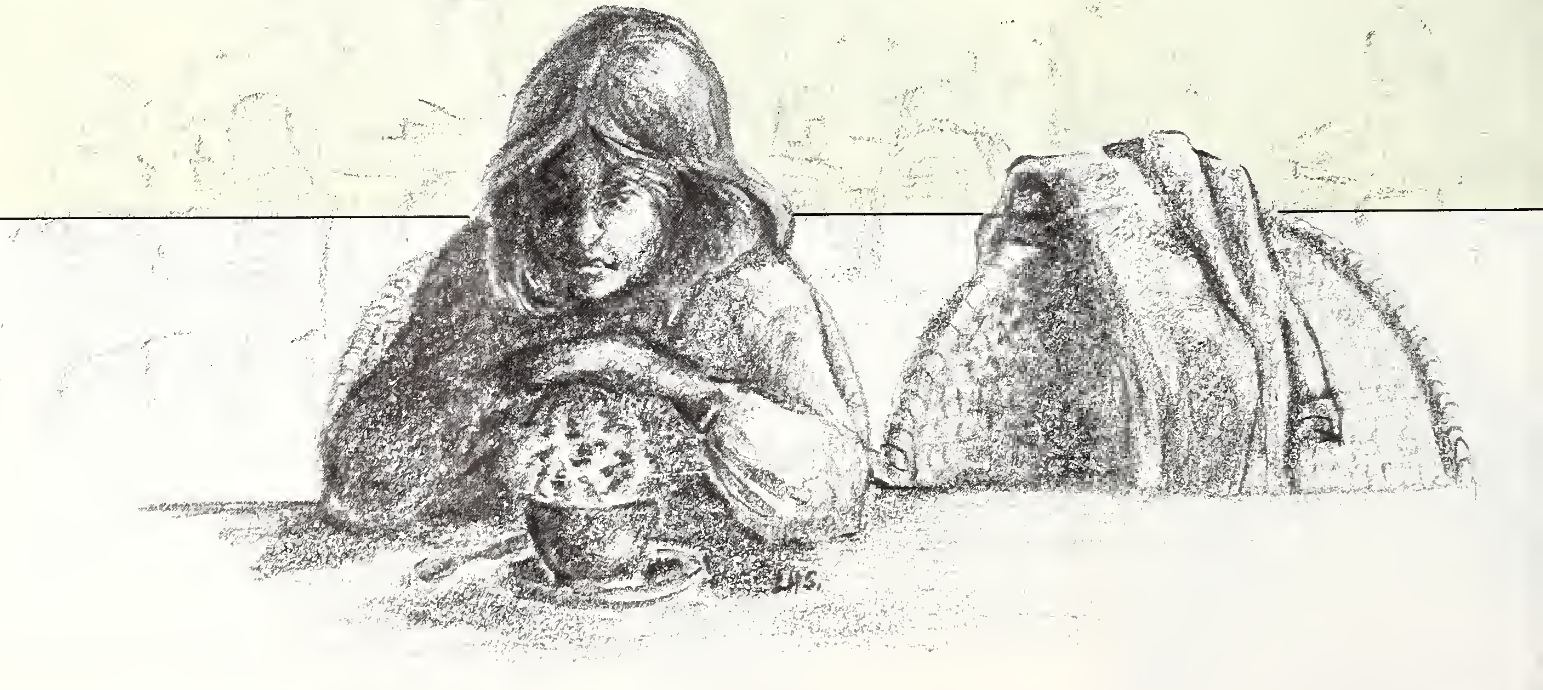
Feeling a bit out of place, she sighed and discreetly wiped her spoon — just like her mother had taught her. The habit was now ingrained, a definite part of her meticulous, programmed nature. Slowly unwrapping the ham sandwich she had brought from home, she began nibbling, unenthused, on the stale crust. For 12 lonely months she had eaten lunch at her desk, choosing cold sandwiches and leftover chicken from the night before, rather than risk another painful encounter. But today she felt confident — self-assured. A new year loomed ahead, and she was ready for the challenge.

Rapidly the cafeteria filled with hungry workers, clattering silverware, and a stifling mixture of perfumes and aftershaves. She finished her sandwich, the ham dry and tasteless, and he still had not made his appearance. No, she knew she had not missed him. His small, elderly frame and ragged clothing would stick out in the well-groomed crowd like a fire engine at a funeral.

"Perhaps it was only a coincidence that he had lunch here that day," she thought. "Yes, just happened by, wrecked my life, then disappeared into thin air like a puff of smoke." She picked up her soup spoon, disgusted with herself for having been so assuming. Under normal circumstances she didn't presuppose anything. "He wouldn't dare pull the old vanishing act," she smoldered. "Not when it's taken me a whole year to dig up enough courage to face him and his unsolicited meddling."

She thought back to that day last January, like she had done so many times during the past year. He had been nothing more than a beggar, his skin hanging around bones that had seen many hours of grueling hardship and wear. He had appeared old and gnarled and tired. The tops of his hands had been scarred completely through to the palms, and she often wondered what had transpired to create such hideous wounds. Yet he had been strangely wise . . . and gentle . . . and sweet. Yes, he had even been sweet.

"Excuse me, but is this seat being saved?" The deep voice was barely audible above the clanging dishes and lunchroom chatter. She glanced up quickly to see a polished gentleman towering above the table; his lunch tray balanced on one arm, his overcoat neatly folded across the other. He was strong, rugged, nice looking, obviously an executive from one of the surrounding business offices. "I'm sorry to disturb you," he politely apologized, "but this seems to be the only chair in the cafeteria that doesn't have an owner."



ll stands

Mechanically she reached over and shifted her coat to the back of her own chair, then made room on the table for another set of dishes. There was little point now in holding down an extra place; the old man had obviously chosen to eat his lunch elsewhere.

“Here, I brought you a cup of coffee,” the stranger said, carefully placing a steaming mug to the right of her soup bowl. “Would you kindly accept it as my peace offering for disturbing your thoughts?”

She smiled and motioned for him to be seated. “Apology accepted,” she answered. Obliged, he unloaded his tray. Next to her makeshift lunch, his three pieces of crispy chicken and large, tossed salad topped with a sharp tomato looked delicious.

Pulling up the vacated chair, the distinguished stranger loosened his tie and took a cautious gulp of coffee. “The soup must be up to its usual standard,” he said lightly. “As I was standing in line, I noticed your spoon never managed to hit the bowl, as if you were drumming up the courage to give it a taste.” He laughed. “I can tell you’ve eaten here before.”

Embarrassed, she looked down, trying to think of something intelligent to say. “I guess I really didn’t give it much of a chance,” she finally offered. “It’s been one of those days. You know the kind — when thinking is more important than eating.”

“Ah,” he answered, “a thinker. Well, since I have obviously ruined your solitude, the least I can do is lend a listening ear. How about it?” He handed her the largest piece of chicken. “Here,” he offered. “I simply can’t allow you to consume that cold stuff you’ve got in front of you.”

Baffled by his sudden generosity, she took his offering without argument. “There’s really not much to tell,” she sighed. “I just came here today to meet an old man, and he didn’t show up.” Once the words were spoken, she realized how strange the whole thing sounded. “He was here a year ago,” she attempted to explain. “He came over to my table and helped me make out my New Year’s resolution.” She reached into her purse and pulled out a large yellow legal pad. “See what he wrote?” Large black letters were written boldly across the top sheet — *I will obey*. “I’m extremely serious about the resolutions I make,” she went on. “They are important to me because they involve my relationship with the Lord.”

She paused to catch her listener’s reaction and found his eyes intently studying her face. Suddenly she wanted to stop the conversation, to pull back around her the comforting walls that she felt strangely crumbling. Why was she sharing with this man? A man who probably did not even believe in God.

“Please, please go on,” the stranger chided, stabbing the air with a fork full of lettuce. “You know it’s not polite to leave a listener dangling in the middle of a tantalizing story.”

She took a small bite of chicken, hoping the roof would collapse or someone would rob the place. Anything to keep her from having to say another word. “Well,” she finally relented, “when I told the old man about all the things I had planned to add to my busy church schedule, he didn’t seem too impressed. Instead, he asked me if I had ever learned to obey God’s voice, whether I checked with him before I made any decisions or plans.” She lowered her voice to one shade above a whisper. “I’m afraid before I could answer his question, he already knew the answer. He simply picked up my Eversharp and wrote ‘I will obey’ on my tablet, then got up from the table and, just like that, vanished into the crowd.”

The stranger continued to savor his coffee, his face quiet and peaceful. It seemed like centuries before he spoke. “Did you take the kindly old man’s advice?”

“Yes, and I nearly died!” Her answer fairly exploded from her lips. “That stupid resolution turned my life upside down, nearly ripped my entire being into shreds. In fact, I cried so much I considered buying shares in the Kleenex company.”

A faint smile spread across her listener’s face. “Ah yes,” he answered softly. “It isn’t as easy as it sounds.”

Her normally small eyes widened in surprise. “You know about obedience?” she asked curiously. “I mean the kind I’m talking about?”

Casually he leaned back on his chair. “Sometimes I like to think I invented the word.” The answer was soft, so pensive, as though he meant it only for himself.

The drifting silence was heavy, and she uneasily sensed there were struggles around the table other than her own. “I always thought of myself as a good, church-going Christian,” she blurted. “I mean really good. When that ragged bum hit me with obedience, I was just vain enough and mad enough to accept the challenge. Of course, that’s when my life fell apart.”

Grabbing the yellow pad, she flung it to the floor, creating enough noise to draw the attention of a number of fellow diners. Her companion laughed heartily, breaking the tension that threatened to

Twelve months ago (see *The Mennonite*, Jan. 5, 1982, issue) an old man had met her at lunch in this exact same place. His presence had changed her whole year. It had not been easy. Today she wanted to see him again.

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engulf what remained of their lunch hour. Holding her head in both hands and gazing at the patterned ceiling, she began to giggle. "You won't believe this, but I'm normally a very together person," she apologized. "I can't imagine why I'm telling you all these things."

"Don't forget," he reminded her, "I asked for your thoughts." Obviously not affected by her unglued performance, he motioned for a waitress to replenish his cup of coffee. "Besides," he continued, "I rather consider it a compliment."

She polished off the remaining chicken and carefully wiped her greasy hands on a crumpled paper napkin. "Do you have any idea how quiet the Lord's voice really is?" She looked squarely into her listener's face. "I figured if I was doing good things and going to church, I was automatically listening. But I was wrong. Oh, was I ever wrong. When I finally sat down and decided to communicate with God, all I got was silence — absolutely nothing. So I disciplined myself to two hours of Bible study and prayer every day. You see, I don't give up easily. The more I read, the louder that inner voice became. But the decisions became harder instead of easier." Her voice quivered slightly. "Before, I had only my own wishes, and I could pretty well do as I pleased. But now I found I had two choices to face — my own *and* God's."

Salty tears began to trickle, bleeding black mascara down her once-powdered cheeks. Leaning back, she took a deep breath. The stranger offered a neatly folded handkerchief but she did not notice. Taking several moments, she quickly regained her composure. "Sometimes I'd choose the easy way — *mine*," she confessed. "Other times I'd fuss and cry and then choose his way. No matter how right my plans looked at the moment, in the end his was always the better choice. Oh, I've wanted to smack that grimy old man in the face so many times."

Clearing her cheeks with the back of her right hand, she set her jaw firmly in place and methodically gathered the remains of both lunches. "It's the toughest thing I've ever done," she said in a determined tone. "But it's been like climbing a mountain. Once you've reached the summit, you forget what it took to get you there. I don't want to go back anymore. I've found a new, inner joy . . . joy that I never knew was possible. . . . Well, anyway, I just wanted to thank that old man and let him know that my new resolution remains the same because I'm onto something big. Obedience is changing me. It's like suddenly being let out of a cage. . . . I'm free. I plan on saving that yellow piece of paper for a long time — and maybe even a while after that."

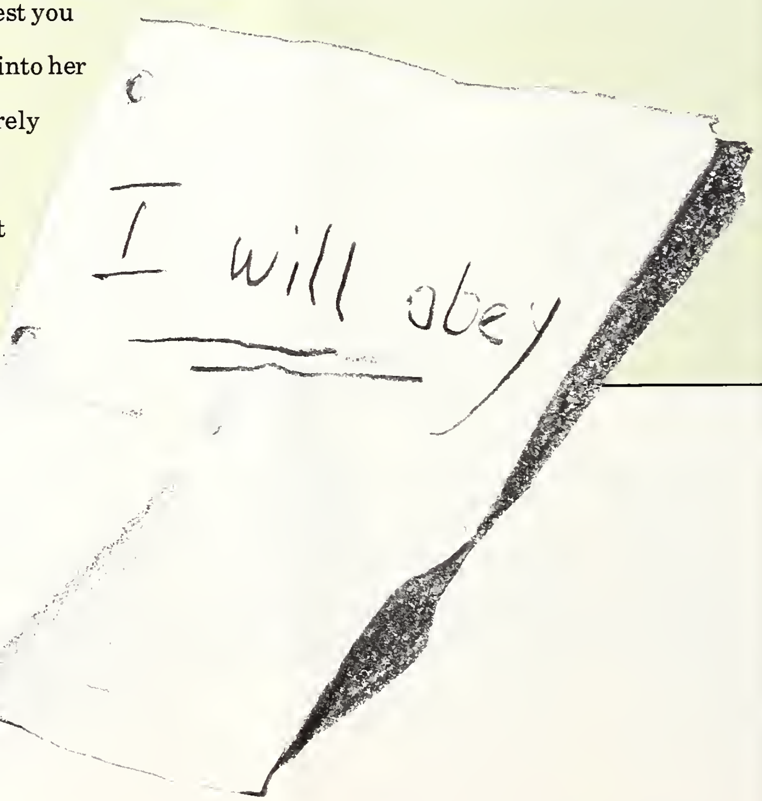
Reluctantly the gentleman rose to his feet and accepted the tray of dishes she had neatly stacked together. "Thank you for making my lunch hour anything but boring," he said. "And I agree. I don't really think you can come up with a resolution that could possibly top your current one. I suggest you stay with it."

Quickly slipping into her coat, she tied the matching belt securely around her waist. "You know," she confided, "I really should feel bad that I monopolized the whole lunch hour, but for some reason I don't. You've been most kind to listen. It's just unfortunate the old gentleman who started this whole thing wasn't here to join us. I'm sure he doesn't get much out of life from others, and this might have brightened his day."

"Perhaps he's more knowing than you think," the stranger offered, his eyes twinkling at her puzzled face. "His purpose in your life has obviously been accomplished. You're on the way to becoming a new creature in Christ. I doubt if you'll ever need to see that old man again."

She smiled and waved as she watched her dinner guest disappear through the thinning noontime crowd. There was something familiar about his walk, the way he carried himself. It was as if she had seen that gait before. Yet he was tall and stately, not short. He was mature and young, not old and badly wrinkled. But his hands, yes, they were the same — scarred from the palms completely through to the other side. Why hadn't she put it all together?

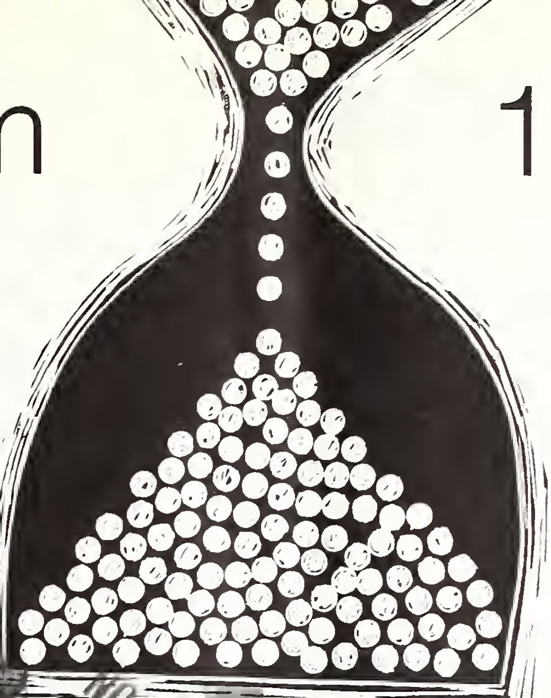
"Yes, yes, he does know the meaning of obedience," she murmured softly to herself. "Yes, and so will I. Oh God, teach me." •



Just three words on a piece of paper but they had burned their meaning deeply into her life. Obedience in all — not *more activities* — is what God desires for all believers to enjoy.

Protestantism 1982

Donovan E. Smucker



GC and other Mennonites had to face squarely how we respond when some of our own children refuse to answer the government's call to register for another attempt to solve the world's problems through military efforts.

NO RESTART
AT TMI

Six-month-old April Wolf of Hummelstown, Pa., wears a hat that symbolizes the worldwide evidence of concern about the nuclear threat. This concern came into the open worldwide in 1982.

Pope John Paul II spoke with Argentina's ruling junta about seeking alternatives to war during the Falklands conflict.

In a turbulent time of political, military and religious conflict, U.S. and Canadian Protestants have displayed their usual paradox of stability and change.

Topping all stories during the year was the controversial six-day visit of Billy Graham and other Protestant leaders to the Moscow peace conference. Other delegates included Bishop David Preus of the American Lutheran Church, Arie Brouwer, general secretary of the Reformed Church in America, Bruce Rigdon of McCormick Theological Seminary, Chicago, and Frank Epp, head of Mennonite Central Committee Peace Section, whose parents were born in Russia.

The core issues were Graham's remarks concerning religious liberty in the Soviet Union in which he said, "It would seem to me that in the churches I visited in the Soviet Union, and there are thousands of them, services are allowed to go on freely." When interviewed by American journalists he stood by most of his remarks but pointed out that he didn't mean to say there was total freedom. The 64-year-old evangelist preached a typical Graham sermon — in the biggest Baptist church in Moscow — about sin, forgiveness and the gospel of Jesus. Looking straight into the eye of his critics, Graham said, "I know I may be used for propaganda, but I believe my propaganda — the gospel — is stronger."

It is obvious that Billy Graham has come a long way since he left the mountains of North Carolina to study in fundamentalist schools in Tampa, Fla., and Wheaton, Ill.

President Reagan also waded into controversy when he announced plans last May to introduce a constitutional amendment to allow organized voluntary prayer in the public schools. The White House statement said that "no one must ever be forced or coerced or pressured to take part in religious exercises, but neither should the government forbid religious practice." He added that the First Amendment was not supposed to protect us from religion but to protect religion from government tyranny. The chief executive's advisers pointed out that the CBS news poll of March 1982 showed that 69 percent of those interviewed thought that organized prayer in public schools should be permitted while 19 percent said it should be forbidden.

The Reagan initiative immediately drew opposition from 60 national and 110 local groups, including the Baptist joint committee on public affairs, the National Coalition for Public Education and Religious Liberty, the National Council of Churches and leading Jewish organizations. Their statements said the president's proposal violates separation of church and state and that a prayer acceptable to everyone would trivialize prayer by robbing it of its depth and meaning. Washington media people do not think the amendment has any chance of passing. Jerry Falwell was part of a small minority who said it would receive approval.

In Houston the American Civil Liberties Union filed a suit in federal court to stop Aldine High School from using its school song, which calls on God in Jesus' name to lead its teams to victory.

Another head of state, Margaret Thatcher of the United Kingdom, denounced the Falklands memorial service in St. Paul's Cathedral because "of cringing clergy throwing doubt on the sacrifices of our fighting men." The service stressed peace and reconciliation rather than a British military victory.

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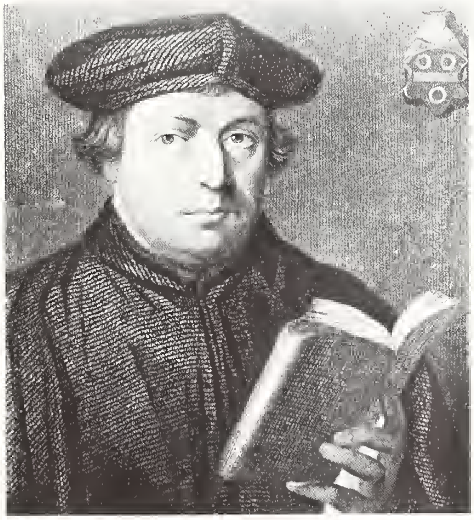
Billy Graham speaks on disarmament in Moscow. He said nuclear weapons have put us all "at the gate of hell."

While 1983 marks the 500th anniversary of Martin Luther, the ALC, LCA and the Association of Evangelical Churches voted on Sept. 8 to become one denomination by 1988.



A veteran Lebanese soldier of the Christian militia returned to his home church in Damour after it had been used by the PLO as a maintenance garage during the hostilities with Israel.

Much of the world wonders what Lech Walesa's release from prison may signal for Poland.

Sun Myung Moon sprinkles holy water over some of the more than 2,000 couples being married July 1 at Madison Square Garden.

Among the parts of the service was Pope John Paul's speech at Coventry Cathedral — scene of some of the worst bombings of World War II — condemning war as a way of settling disputes.

The terrible events in Lebanon have strained Jewish-Christian relations, leading to a meeting in New York between leading representatives from both sides. The Jews said that they had friendlier relations with conservative groups who see a special place for Israel in biblical prophecy. Protestant relief agencies like World Vision, Church World Service and Mennonite Central Committee have ministered more frequently to the Palestinian refugees. Rabbi Alexander Schindler of the Union of Hebrew Congregations said that the meeting was "a sincere attempt on the part of Christians to understand how we feel." Meanwhile, the massacre in September has obviously brought a major negative reaction in Israel itself.

An underground railway, reminiscent of the clandestine network that smuggled slaves north before and during the U.S. Civil War, has been established by a group of American churches to help refugees from El Salvador and Guatemala. John Fife of the Southside Presbyterian Church in Tucson, Ariz., directs one of the way stations. The church said that it smuggled 350 refugees into the United States last year. The pastor said that the policy of the United States was to ignore his church and hope it would go away. Moreover, he said no one wants to arrest a pastor in a church.

The World Council of Churches Sixth Assembly will be held in Vancouver, July 24 - Aug. 10, 1983, with the theme "Jesus Christ — the Life of the World." The 25-person executive committee of the assembly is headed by Canadian Anglican Archbishop Edward Scott. They have made a paragraph-by-paragraph refutation of an attack on the Council by the *Reader's Digest* (August 1982 issue).

Another action of the *Reader's Digest* was to publish an abbreviated version of the Bible which deletes half of the Old Testament and one-fourth of the New Testament. Bruce Metzger of Princeton Theological Seminary was the editor. In the past there was always opposition from Protestants to any deletions which might eliminate doctrines the editors did not like. Metzger used another principle, namely, to delete duplications as in the Four Gospels.

Sun Myung Moon was sentenced in a New York court in July to 18 months in prison and a $25,000 fine for evading taxes. Unification Church officials are appealing. Earlier in the summer 2,075 couples from Moon's church were married in a mass ceremony in Madison Square Garden.

Two significant Protestant mergers are in the offing: the so-called northern (United Presbyterian Church in the USA) and southern (Presbyterian Church in the United States) reuniting after 122 years of separation caused by the Civil War. The other is among three Lutheran bodies, American, United and Association, leaving the Missouri Synod the only large group in isolation. The new denomination of 5.4 million will be the fourth largest denomination in the United States after the Southern Baptists, United Methodists and National Baptists.

In Canada, one of the most striking developments was the evangelical explosion in Quebec, where the number of French-speaking conservative churches has doubled since 1976. Pentecostal, Baptist, Christian Brethren and Mennonite Brethren are among the leading churches.

Growth statistics: Africa's addition of 4,000 members daily has produced nonwhite dominance among racial groups in the Christian church for the first time in 2,000 years. North America: Membership increased by 1 percent, ending the declines of the 1960s. But the 1 percent increase annually lags behind the population growth. •

Christian business ventures

Calvin Redekop

A recent telephone caller wanted to chat with me about problems in his business. Over lunch the entrepreneur confided that his business was on the verge of being closed. "Technically," he said, "I am bankrupt." As with most businessmen in trouble, he was seeking help when it was almost too late. This scenario is happening ever more frequently due to the economic and political conditions in Canada and the United States.

But the greatest heaviness I experienced in consulting with this Christian brother (and others similar in recent months) was not his almost impossible financial bind. It was the nature of his business. Not that it was illegal; on the contrary, it is one of the most prevalent types of businesses in the United States and Canada, one in which the competition is strong. But prevalence does not make it good.

In talking with another brother, who subsequently counseled this person, I said, "I want to help the brother, but his type of business is not high on my priority list." He agreed, but said, "At the moment the businessman is in trouble and we need to help."

Many business failures are due to the entire sociopolitical economic structure undergoing tremendous changes as it moves from a *consumer* society to a *conserver* society. And my friend's business was one item in the massive shift. The coming of the conserver society will trim, pull up, and otherwise change many of the traditional business practices and institutions. Old systems will become less significant and new services and goods will come to the fore.

For the average entrepreneur this means that he or she will need to "discern the times" to know what will be the significant goods and services in the conserver society. Fortunately for Christians, and especially Mennonites, the food production, processing and serving business are necessary and moral as far into the future as we remain mortal. Hence farming is a sure bet, albeit more difficult all the time.

But how can one find out what will be important and profitable in the future? Most would-be entrepreneurs overlook one of the greatest resources in making such decisions. No, you guessed wrong, not the local banker. A banker cannot, by virtue of professional role, even think in terms other than fiscal responsibility. The bank's role is to preserve the trust of savers and investors. The best resources a would-be entrepreneur has are Christian sisters and brothers in the congregation.

Ironically, when a business person gets in trouble, it is the co-believers that normally get him or her out of trouble. Why not recognize their value and resources in helping to decide which businesses have a future orientation and are viable and needed? The reason usually is that he or she knows they would counsel in a direction different from what the person wants — a bit of the good old American independence and individualism asserting itself. But the most pathetic thing is that the type of business a person wants to enter usually is not future- or conserver-society oriented.

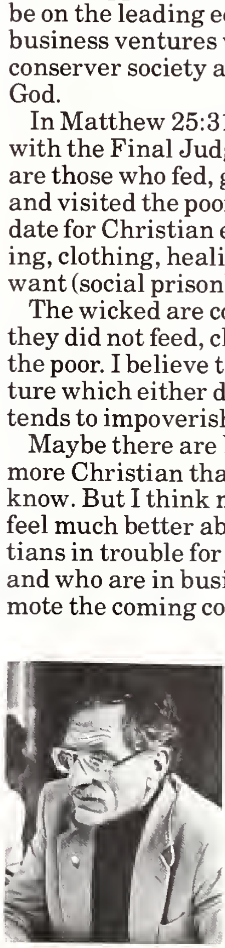
Christians in the business sector are not called to jump into the competitive torrents wildly flailing about to keep above water, but rather called into ventures which make a definite contribution to the welfare of society and to the principles on which the kingdom of God is to be built. This will not preclude the possibilities of bankruptcy, but it will provide for a much more wholesome milieu in which the Christian community can feel free to counsel and help, because they can support the venture.

The New Testament is disturbingly silent in this area. Should a Christian entrepreneur set up an organization to sell life insurance? What about manufacturing leisure and pleasure items? What about a machine shop making washers? (I narrowly escaped buying into the latter several years ago.) My interpretation (or bias) of the New Testament's "tilt" suggests that Christians should be on the leading edge of promoting business ventures which promote the conserver society and/or the kingdom of God.

In Matthew 25:31-46 we are presented with the Final Judgment. The "blessed" are those who fed, gave drink, clothed and visited the poor. Here is the mandate for Christian entrepreneurs — feeding, clothing, healing, freeing from want (social prison).

The wicked are condemned because they did not feed, clothe, heal and free the poor. I believe this means any venture which either directly or indirectly tends to impoverish people is sin.

Maybe there are business enterprises more Christian than others. I don't know. But I think most people would feel much better about helping Christians in trouble for the good of others and who are in businesses which promote the coming conserver society.



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New Year's thoughts

Donald W. Fry

I am an avid sports viewer. I cannot help but get caught up in fantasies concerning how the hapless teams I cheer for could make it to the top of their divisions. Usually these visions center around the basic thought: "If only my team would have Mr. Superstar playing for them, then they could be number one." This kind of thinking is not unique to me. Because of it, major league baseball players have one of the highest median incomes of any group of individuals in the world. All owners, coaches and fans constantly look for the "the player who can turn this team around and make us a winner."

I guess to some extent the reason this type of entertainment is so captivating for me is that there is still the little boy in me that can fantasize being the star of the team, "the one player who can turn this team around," the sought after free agent with 17 teams offering barrels of money so I can make them a winner. So go the secret fantasies of residual childhood.

If this were the full extent of the sports fantasy in the world, if thoughts of superstars were limited to escapist Monday night entertainment, I probably would not pause to think about it further. What is of concern to me, however, is that the superstar mentality seems to also be a part of the church scene.

In many ways the paid pastoral ministry seems to be going in the same direction as professional sports. Just as teams wait for the one player who can turn it all around, so churches often look for the pastor who can preach, teach, visit and pray the congregation to prominence. Some of the congregations find their superstar, others do not. I am not sure which of these I feel most sorry for.

For those congregations which find their superstar, things can appear good for a time. Attendance begins to go up almost immediately as the word gets out that Rev. Smith is a good preacher. People are won to the congregation by "his winning smile," "down to earth manner" and "good Bible-centered preaching and teaching." Soon that congregation is catapulted to stardom with people saying, "Oh yes, you go to Rev. Smith's church," and, "He certainly has turned the church around," and, "Isn't he wonderful?" And the masses come because everyone likes a winner.

Unfortunately, the time always must come for contract renewal, and Rev. Smith hears a call to another messiah-seeking congregation. With many tears shed, the pastor leaves. And the congregation is left with a superstar vacuum. There is an effort to locate another superstar, but the other churches seem to be able to "attract the talent and we can't." Besides, "I don't think anyone could replace Rev. Smith." So the congregation settles for someone else. But the luster of glory past fades. The congregation shrinks. Spirits are downcast. And the congregation reminisces, "Wasn't it great back when Rev. Smith was here? If only we could have those days back." And the condition of the congregation is worse than its beginning.

Congregations which have sought but never found a superstar, on the other hand, have no feelings of glory lost, but they have visions of what might in the future be. "If only we could find the right person . . . if only Rev. Jones would come, then we would make it. . . . I just know Rev. Jones could bring them in." So the congregation waits, frozen in a purgatory of mediocrity while waiting for their opportunity to become what they can be. The result is that every pastor which serves there is in actuality an interim pastor, serving the interim until the superstar arrives. But the one hoped for never comes, so the waiting never stops.

At this writing it has been one year since I became pastor at a small congregation. By most measuring devices used for the pastoral ministry, this year has been successful. Attendance is up, comments are circulating about good preaching, turning this church around, etc, yet I am left with pangs of caution. In the face of apparent successes, I have more questions than answers.

Is Jesus Christ being glorified through my ministry, or in the final analysis is it really I? Are those in the congregation of which I am a part becoming more competent in their ministries, or more dependent on a team superstar? Do those who come to our services who did not come before come because of a fresh desire to seek the Lord or because it is the best entertainment available on Sunday morning? Have I subconsciously begun to fulfill my secret residual childhood fantasies of sports stardom by yielding to pressures to become an ecclesiastical superstar?

At the bottom line, is my position as a paid pastor a help or a hindrance to the kingdom of God?

Visiting GC congregations

Marvin and Jeannie Zehr

Successful flights into outer space call for skilled and trained astronauts, but also necessary are the skills, training and dedication of the ground crews. If at any point communication between astronauts and ground crew breaks down, the success of the mission is in serious jeopardy.

During Marv's term on the General Board of the General Conference, and Jeannie's responsibility as editor of *Window to Mission*, we have felt a growing concern for the need to strengthen communication between those in staff and leadership positions in the conference and our ground crew in mission — our congregations.

We felt a special concern for the smaller and geographically isolated congregations who often do not receive visits from missionaries and conference staff.

Out of this concern we began to dream about the possibility of taking time during a sabbatical leave to visit such congregations on behalf of the General Conference. We approached Maplewood Mennonite Church — which Marv pastors — about such a sabbatical plan, and they responded affirmatively.

We shared our dream with the General Board and Women in Mission staff and executive committees, who also affirmed this venture and agreed to pay for our travel costs.

The purpose of our trip was to share information concerning the program and mission of our conference and to hear any questions and concerns which pastors and lay people would like to share concerning conference work. Jeannie was also to be available to WM groups to share about Women in Mission and share in program planning ideas. The agenda and format for our visits was to be determined according to the needs and desires of congregations visited.

The itinerary was set to visit churches in Pennsylvania, Minnesota, South Dakota, North Dakota, Montana, Saskatchewan, Alberta and Washington state. Letters were mailed out and we waited for responses to come in. In a few weeks our itinerary began to take shape.

Then we learned in late March that Jeannie's mother, who had had surgery for cancer nine months earlier, was having difficulty seeing and walking. Before we arrived in Lima, Ohio, the next day, she had gone to the hospital. A day later the doctor reported what we had already suspected; she had a brain tumor.

How quickly things changed. Our lives revolved around hers. We wondered, How long? How fast? How much pain is ahead? Treatments were started. When all had been done that could be done we prepared to bring Mother to our home in Fort Wayne, Ind.

We wondered what these new events in our lives would mean for our sabbatical, which was scheduled to begin June 1. Would we need to cancel? How long could we wait to decide? We prayed and turned it over to God. We had felt his leading so strongly throughout all our previous preparations for the sabbatical travels, and we knew that now he would show us his way if we would but trust him.

In the midst of our uncertainty and Mother's uncertainty, her life was suddenly and painlessly taken from her. Though deeply grieved, we also felt great joy that she would not have to suffer. There was a clear sense of God's presence and leading. Her future was now clear. And God's will for our plans was affirmed, with enough time to make all arrangements.

When we arrived at our first stop at Smith Corner Mennonite Church near East Freedom, Pa., we were warmly greeted by Grover and Alice Stockenus, who have served the congregation for 21 years. The rightness of our planned visits to churches was affirmed when Grover met us with, "It's about time our church gets some recognition from the General Conference."

We too were glad we had come. The Stockenus family warmly opened their home, their church and their lives to us. We were lifted by their commitment.

This was the beginning of our visits to over 50 congregations and 11,500 miles of travel during June and July. For eight weeks we gained many insights, heard concerns, shared hurts and joys, met many interesting and concerned lay people and pastors and hopefully gave new encouragement to congregations. *First in a series of articles about some of the things we learned, concerns we felt and people we met*

Marvin and Jeannie Zehr (left) planned their itinerary in consultation with Vern Preheim, general secretary, and Joan Wiebe, WM coordinator.

Enten Eller, the Church of the Brethren college student who became the first nonregistrant to be prosecuted since Jimmy Carter's 1980 proclamation, was sentenced on Dec. 8 to perform two years of free public service. In a Roanoke, Va., courtroom, U.S. District Judge James Turk told Eller, 21, that he could wait until after his graduation from Bridgewater College in June before reporting for service. He was convicted on Aug. 17 and ordered to register with Selective Service within 90 days. "I'm sorry I did not comply with the conditions of probation," Eller told the court during the Dec. 8 hearing. "But I felt I had no other choice." He had maintained all along that to register would violate his religious beliefs.

In responding to the sentence, Assistant U.S. Attorney Montgomery Tucker said that Turk's ruling was "acceptable, but not preferable." Tucker had asked that the judge send Eller to prison for two years. In listing acceptable options for Eller's service, Judge Turk mentioned the Veteran's Administration hospital in Richmond, a mental hospital in Staunton and a community mediation service in Harrisonburg. The final location will be worked out in consultation with Eller's probation officer.

NEWS

First school kits reach Kampuchean children

Svay Rieng, Kampuchea (MCC) — Fourteen rows of students from Prea Pun Lia village school stood fidgeting, tiptoeing and stretching their necks to see the bearded foreigner. A delegation of village and provincial committee members sat drinking coconut juice with the foreigner in the shade of a tree beside a squatty shed which serves as the village pagoda and a schoolroom for two classes.

Presidents of three committees, the local parents' committee, the subdistrict committee and the provincial education committee, spoke. They directed their comments to the teachers, students and a fourth committee, the Mennonite Central Committee.

The foreigner then spoke a few words about students he knew in the United States and Canada who had learned about the problems of the students in Kampuchea and who had, in response, joined together in small groups to prepare special school kits to share with the students here in Svay Rieng.

Then it was time to distribute the MCC school kits. As the headmaster called each class, a boy and girl representing the class came forward and bowed slightly with their palms together in the traditional Khmer greeting. With another quick bow and *aa-kun*, which means thank you, they took an armful of the colorful, drawstring bags to share with their classmates.

After the distribution, children ran back and forth, comparing the color of their drawstring bags, their notebooks, their pens. The headmaster, observing one cluster of students, admonished them, "These things came from children in North America. These materials are good. Now you must study even harder."

Whenever one gives relief or any other kind of aid, there are lingering doubts and questions: "Was it an appropriate type of aid? Is it really needed? Will it make any difference?" After talking with several students, these questions faded for us.

One question, however, still remains, a question that was asked by the president of the provincial education committee. "How many more kits will you send us? Can I plan to give one to each student?"

"We hope so," we replied.

MCC has already shipped 43,000 school kits to Kampuchea. But another 43,000 are needed to meet the goal of 86,000, the total number needed if each school child in Svay Rieng is to have a school kit for 1983. *Fred and Minh Kauffman*

Students at Prea Pun Lia village school hold MCC school kits.

Canada Manpower and Immigration has announced cutbacks on immigration levels. Canada's "planning range" had been from 134,000 to 144,000 immigrants for 1983. This will now be reduced to 105,000 to 110,000. Of these, 12,000 are to be refugees, down from 14,000. The main cutbacks in government-sponsored refugees were for Eastern Europe and Indochina. But there were increases for Latin America, Africa and the Middle East. Refugees sponsored by private groups are not subject to these limitations.

A group from the Mennonite church in Beppu prepares to distribute leaflets announcing the film Jesus of Nazareth.

Beppu, Japan — Over 1,000 people attended a showing of the film *Jesus of Nazareth* here on Nov. 21. The event was the culmination of weeks of prayer and work by members of the Beppu Christian Church, a small Mennonite congregation where Commission on Overseas Mission missionaries Peter and Mary Derksen are pastoring. The number that attended exceeded their expectations.

Laotian hospital is recipient of MCC aid

Vientiane, Laos (MCC) — Becoming aware of a critical shortage of medical supplies in Laos, Mennonite Central Committee has given aid to a provincial hospital in Savannakhet. The essential medicines, dental and laboratory supplies and soap shipped to the hospital mark MCC's first medical involvement in this country.

During a visit to Savannakhet last spring, MCC workers Linda and Titus Peachey of Philadelphia discovered acute needs. They recall, "As we walked through each ward jotting down notes and requests, the medical people in charge showed us rusting surgical needles, their last vial of an important anesthetic, an empty bottle of dental filling material and a laboratory room almost completely devoid of equipment and materials."

The Peacheys' hearts were especially touched when they saw a pair of tiny twins, who were born prematurely the day before their visit. "Lying there fast asleep beside their mother's bed with no access to the sophisticated equipment we so often take for granted, they seemed to symbolize so well life's fragility as well as the vulnerability of those who are poor, weak and defenseless."

The provincial hospital in Savannakhet was originally built between the 1920s and 1930s. The buildings are aging and in bad repair. There are no fans nor are there screens in the windows. "Mattresses and sheets appeared to exist only in the 15-bed section reserved for government workers, foreign guests and Buddhist monks," observed the Peacheys. "The other patients are required to bring their own sleeping mats and mosquito nets to spread over the wooden beds."

There are only six doctors in the province of Savannakhet, according to the Peacheys' report. Yet of that number, four doctors are not working in the general health-care field. This leaves only two doctors to care for the 440,000 residents of Savannakhet.

Fortunately, Laos does not rely solely on doctors to meet the medical needs of its people. There are special programs to train medical assistants, nurses and village health workers, although teaching materials are few and resources often inadequate. MCC's plans for 1983 include supplying the hospital with reference books and small pieces of equipment so that health workers can continue to upgrade their services to the community.

The Peacheys found that the hospital programs are spreading health-care awareness even to the villages. "It is encouraging to see the rather concerted effort that is being made to spread basic health concepts such as the importance of cleanliness, boiled water, latrines and mosquito nets," they remarked.

Aid to the hospital was not the only MCC Laos project in 1982. Three junior high teacher training centers received teaching aids, kitchen supplies, garden tools, blankets and mosquito nets from MCC. Agricultural schools in Xieng Khuoang and Houa Phan provinces and a seed research and experimentation station near Vientiane also received assistance from MCC.

Also in 1982 MCC Laos purchased a sawmill for Xieng Khuoang province. Sawmill operators trained by MCC cut lumber which is then used for building schools, clinics and rice warehouses in several counties of the province.

The goal of the 1982 program was to help alleviate the difficult living conditions that had in the past encouraged the exodus of many of Laos' teachers, students and medical personnel. Titus notes that MCC's willingness to give aid to the people "represents the church's desire to give expression to a faith in God which affirms the dignity of all people."

GC projects receive $20,000 in MMA grants

Goshen, Ind. (MMA) — "Castles in the Air," a musical and dramatic program on poverty and affluence, and educational resources on aging are two of six General Conference Mennonite Church projects receiving grants from Mennonite Mutual Aid's fraternal funds for 1983.

The MMA board of directors approved a total of $114,300 in grants for Mennonite denominational and inter-denominational projects at the second semiannual meeting in Des Plaines, Ill., on Nov. 19. The projects are selected according to their contribution to the "diaconate ministry," mutual aid and stewardship.

Other General Conference projects receiving funds were family conference sessions for Meadowlark Homestead residents (Newton, Kan.), a meeting of Chinese pastors and spouses, a Cheyenne music collection and an addition to the Hopi Mission School (Kykotsmovi, Ariz.).

Inter-Mennonite projects in which the General Conference participates include an adult-youth study elective on prevention of chemical dependency, a film highlighting Mennonite history for the Mennonite World Conference in Strasbourg, France, in 1984 and Mennonite urban church leadership development.

Available because of Mennonite Mutual Aid Association's tax-exemption as a fraternal benefit society, the fraternal project grants are based on denominational membership in the association's programs. For that reason, Mennonite Church projects received $40,000, General Conference Mennonite, $20,000, and Mennonite Brethren, $10,000.

The Evangelical Mennonite Brethren Church received $4,000 for two denominational projects.

Although the year wasn't quite over, the staff and executive committee of the Commission on Home Ministries met in Newton, Kan., on Dec. 8-10 to begin the painful process of trimming down the 1983 program in response to the anticipated budget shortfall for 1982. The group will recommend their proposals to the entire commission for action during Council of Commissions in March, but it already appeared that some projects will be scuttled completely, some staff cuts will be made and salaries for remaining staff will be held at 1982 levels.

A fact-finding team organized by the National Council of Churches in response to an invitation from the office of Guatemalan president Jose Efrain Rios Montt has confirmed reports of "gross and consistent violations of human rights carried out by the armed forces of Guatemala." These violations, the team says, continue policy carried out by previous regimes. In a Nov. 24 report, the team recounts descriptions of extrajudicial killings, torture, disappearances and other human rights violations as described to them in interviews with Guatemalans in Guatemala and in refugee camps in Mexico.

The first comprehensive revision of U.S. immigration laws in 30 years is currently pending in Congress. The Simpson-Mazzoli bill, already passed by the Senate and the House judiciary committees, would drastically tighten immigration regulations and is being opposed by many organizations, including MCC U.S. Opposition to the bill centers around six points: cutbacks in family reunification, sanctions against employers of illegal workers, a requirement that new immigrants carry an identification card, the removal of safeguards for refugees, new political asylum procedures and a new proposal for legalization of immigrants.

New Centre for Mission Studies inaugurated in India

Yavatmal, India — The Centre for Mission Studies, a new school of world mission, was inaugurated at Union Biblical Seminary, Yavatmal, India, on Oct. 24. Ben Wati, chairman of the UBS board of governors, unveiled the foundation stone for the building that will house the center on the new campus at Pune. Following the unveiling, students from UBS cut stalks of ripe grain as a symbol of their commitment to the task of missions.

Wati briefly outlined the history of mission in Nagaland, which in the past 100 years has given birth to a large church in northeast India. Today that church is sending missionaries, many trained at UBS, to other parts of India and to Burma. "I thank God that I am a fruit of foreign missions. Today I have the privilege of being an Indian missionary," he said.

In describing the development of the center, Saphir Athyal noted, "God has placed UBS in the heart of the area where there is the highest concentration of those unreached by the gospel. Christ's mission in the world should be the core of the training program and the guiding force of any theological seminary." Athyal will continue to give leadership to the center until a full-time director is appointed.

Speakers at the inauguration were Patrick Joshua, general secretary of the Friends Missionary Prayer Band, and Paul Hiebert, visiting professor of mission from Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, Calif. Joshua traced the history of the FMPB, one of India's leading mission agencies, and pointed out the open doors that God has given to the church in India. Speaking on John 4:35, Hiebert charged the center with keeping alive the vision of the harvest, with researching strategies for evangelism, with training workers for the task and, above all, with remaining true to the

CENTRE FOR MISSION STUDIES
INAUGURATED BY
Rev.Dr. I BEN WATI

Ben Wati (top left), chairman of the UBS board of governors, and principal Saphir Athyal unveil the foundation stone for the new mission studies center. Meanwhile, construction at the new UBS campus at Pune (below) is continuing.

A Mennonite writers' workshop will be held Jan. 29 at Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg. Topics will include writing news and interviews, fiction for children and adults, feature and editorial writing, short devotional articles and German writing. Fiction and poetry readings by published authors will follow the workshops, and time will be allotted during the day for personal conferences with the resource people. Send registrations to Mennonite Writers' Workshop, CMBC, 600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, MB R3P 0M4. The registration fee will be $10, and the banquet ticket will be $5.

Laotian refugees are choosing to come home, report Titus and Linda Peachey of Philadelphia, Mennonite Central Committee workers in Laos. Over 1,400 Laotians, including Hmong and other minority groups, voluntarily returned to Laos from March 1980 to August 1982. Repatriation, or returning home, is an impossibility to most refugees. They face persecution and sometimes imprisonment or death if they return to the same oppressive governments which they fled. Yet in Laos refugees are apparently being accepted.

The oldest Mennonite periodical published continuously under one name (105 years) is now available on microfilm. Coordinating the microfilming of *Mennonitische Rundschau* was Ken Reddig, archivist at the Center for Mennonite Brethren Studies in Winnipeg. Microfilm copies of the *Rundschau* may be ordered from University Microfilms, 300 N. Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106.

Lord of the harvest. He pointed out that missions begins with a vision, and when a church loses that vision, God prepares another church to take up his work of proclaiming the gospel.

The Centre for Mission Studies has been several years in the planning and will add to the seminary's present offerings a two-year master's degree course in missions and a diploma course for missionaries in service. It will also develop facilities and resource materials for special studies in Hinduism, Islam and traditional religions. Final plans for the center were drawn up this year by an all-India consultation that brought together missiologists, mission executives, missionaries from various fields and theological educators.

UBS is one of the largest theological seminaries in South Asia. It has 207 students from India and other countries.

Earlier in the week the UBS board of governors met in special session to finalize plans for the total move to Pune for the opening of the 1983-84 school year in June. *Helen Kornelsen*

Minister needed

First Mennonite Church in Winnipeg is inviting inquiries for the position of associate minister to work as part of a team of three full-time ministers in a large bilingual congregation.

Direct inquiries to:
Waldemar Janzen
991 Fleet Ave.
Winnipeg, MB R3M 1K5
Phone 204/284-1061.

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"The Wounded Healer" was the theme at this year's annual deacons' family retreat in Manitoba, held Oct. 15-17 at Camp Assiniboia. Abe Reimer, a Crystal City farmer and chaplain at the Salem Home in Winkler, served as resource person. Sessions dealt with communicating the faith, making visitations and maintaining commitment. "Jesus was hurting. We are hurting or have been hurt, but this enables us to help others who are hurting and in need of healing," Reimer said.

The Sentencing Improvement Act of 1982 was to be introduced in the U.S. Senate's lame duck session by Sam Nunn (D-Ga.) and William Armstrong (R-Colo.). The bill proposed alternatives to imprisonment for non-violent offenders, including restitution and community service. The current legal code makes no distinction between violent and non-violent criminals. Prison Fellowship, Chuck Colson's ministry, was a major mover behind the bill, which was co-written by PF staffer Daniel Van Ness.

The volatile situation in the West Bank forced two Mennonite Central Committee workers, Tim and Crissie Buckwalter, to leave their MCC assignment there. The Buckwalters, of Goshen, Ind., were teaching English at Najah University in Nablus prior to their Nov. 3 departure. In September they and the other foreign teachers at Najah were told they could only receive their work permits if they signed a statement promising not to support the Palestine Liberation Organization directly or indirectly. They both signed, but because of threats from students they didn't return to the school. They later retracted their signing.

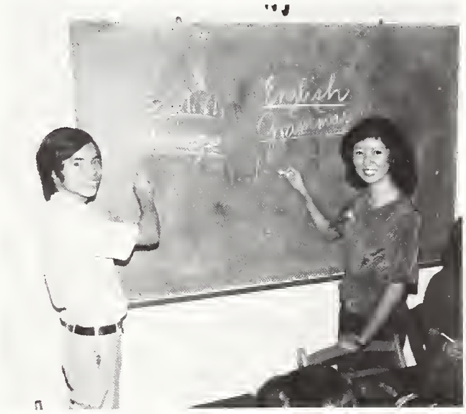
Canadian churches link with Mennonite church in Hong Kong

Newton, Kan. — Many of the young people returning to Hong Kong after completing studies in Canada have re-entry problems.

Rowina Chan recalls, "When I stepped out of the plane at Hong Kong International Airport, I knew I had to learn to adjust myself in this new environment. The style of living here was different in some ways, and I had a rough time coping with that in the beginning." In addition to the difficulties some face in finding suitable jobs, in readjusting to family life and the pace and style of life in Hong Kong, there is also the search for the right place for Christian nurture and fellowship.

Kelly Tsui shares, "Two years (in Canada) passed in seconds. I can recall vividly everything in the past. I had problems finding a place to worship God during the first year in Hong Kong. Indeed I did not have any information about churches here. Praise the Lord that he guided me all the way from Winnipeg to Hong Kong and helped me settle down in the Lok Fu Mennonite Church. Though in this new place I seemed to be a stranger, God built up my sense of belonging through his love."

Johnny Tam was born in a family that worshiped Chinese idols. He did not encounter Christianity until he went to Canada. "I knew nothing about Christ," he says. "Christmas to me meant nothing more than a break from the tedious studies, receiving gifts and a time for picnics. The most significant figure coming into mind at Christmas was Santa Claus, not Jesus Christ the Savior." When Johnny returned to Hong Kong, he says, "I joined the only Mennonite church and now work with brothers and sisters in Christ here to make known Christ's love to others."


Johnny Tam (left) and Rowina Chan

The strongest tie between a Chinese Mennonite church in Canada and Lok Fu in Hong Kong has come from Winnipeg. The Winnipeg group originated as a Bible study group for Chinese students led by Jonathan Chen, a former pastor in Taiwan.

The group outgrew the Chen home and later began meeting in the basement of a Mennonite church. Eventually they called a Chinese minister to become their pastor.

In the summer of 1979, Hugh and Janet Sprunger, former missionaries to Taiwan anticipating a new assignment to Hong Kong, visited the Chen family in Winnipeg. They took the opportunity to get acquainted with the Chinese Mennonite congregation. They spoke to the youth fellowship, preached at the Sunday afternoon worship service, met informally with several Chinese/Taiwanese families and attended a weekend church retreat. Some of the participants were from Hong Kong.

The Sprungers arrived in Hong Kong in early 1980. Shortly thereafter, the Chen family came through following a visit to their families in Taiwan. This provided an opportunity to gather former members of the Bible study group that had returned to Hong Kong. Five young men attended a Chinese dinner in honor of the Chen family.

As a result, a meeting was planned for those individuals in Hong Kong who had attended the Chinese Mennonite Bible study group and church while studying in Canada. A list of 14 people was compiled. Invitations were sent announcing the meeting. The list eventually grew to more than 20. The next meeting date and location was established by those present each time.

The meetings took place every three to four months, usually on a Sunday afternoon in the Sprungers' apartment. These were times to share news about self, friends and the Canadian church, to fellowship around the Bible and prayer and for refreshments and fun.

These meetings continued through the remainder of 1980 and 1981, but have discontinued in 1982. Some of the group leaders have immigrated to Canada and others are active in other churches and activities.

Of all the people on the compiled list, only two were never met personally by the Sprungers. Another four or five came only once to any meeting or activity. Some came two or three times and a few came regularly. Five or six

Civil engineer Kelly Tsui

More than half of the federal income tax U.S. citizens pay each year is spent on military efforts, according to the National Council for a World Peace Tax Fund. Introduced in Congress every year since 1972, the WPTF legislation (H.R. 4897) would provide conscientious objectors with a legal way to avoid paying taxes for military purposes. In an October meeting, the Historic Peace Church Task Force on Taxes decided to promote *dunamis* groups which approach congresspersons in a spirit of compassion rather than confrontation. Their immediate goal is to obtain a dozen more co-sponsors for the WPTF bill in the coming year.

Nearly 70 people participated in the annual Spiritual Life Conference of Japan Mennonite Church on the island of Hokkaido, reports Mennonite Board of Missions in Elkhart, Ind. It was held Oct. 10-11 at a hot-spring resort near Obihiro. Gan Sakakibara of Tokyo, probably the most informed Japanese on the subject of Anabaptism, was guest speaker. His voluminous writings on Anabaptist history, economics and theology have become an invaluable Japanese language resource for Mennonites in Japan. Sakakibara presented a series of three personal testimonies titled "Anabaptism and Me."

Despite a nationwide ban on religious worship, Christians in Kampuchea are "tenaciously holding on to their faith," according to World Vision. The agency reports that "the exuberance and depth of the faith of the Khmer people in the face of such trying circumstances is remarkable. . . . The church, as we think of it, is non-existent in Kampuchea. However, hundreds and possibly more Khmer Christians meet secretly to worship God."

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seemingly lost all interest in the church, but nearly half the group has maintained some tie with a local church and has shown signs of continued spiritual growth and vigor.

An invitation to visit the Lok Fu Mennonite Church was extended at each of these meetings. Some came once, some several times. Some were invited to share their testimonies with the Lok Fu group.

Out of the total group, three — Rowina Chan, Kelly Tsui and Johnny Tam — have chosen to identify with and participate actively in the Mennonite group in Hong Kong.

These three joined the Lok Fu Mennonite Church by letter in January 1982. They have been an asset and contribute much to the small congregation. They not only attend services regularly but take on various responsibilities and leadership roles. Johnny Tam has been elected by the congregation as a deacon and also serves as church treasurer.

Contacts with the Chinese Mennonite church in Winnipeg continue in various ways. The bulletin of the youth fellowship is sent regularly. The former pastor, Francis Tung, preached at Lok Fu during a visit to Hong Kong in 1981. They also encourage those returning to Hong Kong to contact the Mennonites in Hong Kong.

The relationship with Chinese churches in Canada is broadening. More recent contacts have come from the Toronto Chinese Mennonite Church. Some members returning to Hong Kong for a visit have attended the Lok Fu Mennonite Church.

The network of Chinese Mennonite churches in Canada is providing opportunity for mutuality. Those returning from North America to Hong Kong offer leadership, encouragement and support. The Mennonite church in Hong Kong provides a stabilizing factor in re-entry, fellowship and continuity in pursuing Christian growth. *Meribeth J. Sprunger*

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Sergei Batovrin, a leader in the independent Soviet peace movement, has been incarcerated in a Moscow psychiatric hospital. According to a West German human rights group, Batovrin has also been given overdoses of psychiatric drugs. Batovrin, a 25-year-old artist, was arrested in August with three other peace activists. Letters on his behalf can be sent to Yuri Andropov, Presidium of the Supreme Court, The Kremlin, Moscow, USSR.

A Bible Bowl designed by education committee members of the First Mennonite Church, McPherson, Kan., was used this past year for grades three through eight. The six-week course dealt with the life, disciples, miracles and parables of Jesus, people of the Bible and God's promises. The children were assigned to read six to eight Scripture passages at home before each Wednesday evening meeting. Teams for three rounds were then arbitrarily formed by drawing numbers. Winners each week received a prize.

Sponsors are needed for Ethiopian refugees fleeing torture, war and political upheaval in their country. Most are highly motivated, well-educated young people who speak English and adjust well to North American culture. Many are Christians. Financial assistance is available for those who can provide room, board and a warm welcome for three to six months. For information contact Michael Hejny, Presbyterian Resettlement Service, Room 1268, 475 Riverside Drive, New York, NY 10115; 212/870-2465.

Tutoring program provides model for community outreach

Fairview, Mich. — The Comins Mennonite Church here is in its second year of a tutoring program for children who have difficulty with their school work. The church began the program in 1981 after receiving a $2,000 poverty fund grant from the Commission on Home Ministries' peace and justice reference council.

At the beginning of this school year, church members met with the local elementary principal to review the church's program. She provided a list of students who needed assistance.

The church then searched for tutors to match the needs of students and who would be acceptable to the children's parents. The tutors came from the church and community. At present there are 13 tutors for 15 students, although 20 more tutors could be used.

All tutors work on a one-to-one basis. Most students go to the tutors' homes, while a few meet at the school during a free period. CHM funds are used for transporting the children to their homes after the tutoring sessions.

Members of the church saw a need for such a program after some observed that some youth were dropping out of school as soon as they became 16 because they were unable to read well enough to keep up with their peers. One girl was scheduled to spend her third year in the seventh grade.

Many of the students are from homes with internal strife because of long-term unemployment or with one parent in the family. These situations cause too much tension for the child to cope with and still do the assigned school work. Often the tutors become counselors, listening to the students vent their feelings, after which they are better able to get on with the business of doing school work.

Shirley Larrison, director of the program, tells about one child who was helped last year. He was a belligerent fourth grader with a low self-image and poor spelling skills. "The tutor made him feel like he was worthwhile and that somebody cared," she said. "And he improved immensely in his school work."

The school principal said this is the only program they have had which has received no negative responses. This says to us that we must be doing something right, she commented.

It is the hope, prayer and aim of Comins Church members to help youth in their community become well-educated, well-adjusted and productive citizens.
Russell Welty

Cooperative water projects in Swaziland to improve health

Kwaluseni, Swaziland (MCC) — A group of KaBhundla villagers filled with anticipation crowded around the water taps. Would the water really come after weeks of hard work? The cheers and shouts that accompanied the flow of clean water affirmed the success of the KaBhundla spring protection project.

This project is one example of Mennonite Central Committee's efforts to bring water to rural Swazi villagers. Other projects include water catchment, piping water from distant sources, well-digging, reservoirs and clothes washing facilities designed to conserve on water usage.

MCC worker Ron Biel from Lacombe, Alta., works on water projects with the development committee of the Council of Swaziland Churches and MCC worker Dave Kemp from Salinas, Calif., works as a technician for small water projects under the Swaziland government's Rural Water Service.

Cholera and bilharziasis, a blood disease transmitted by snails, are two water-related ailments that afflict many rural communities in Swaziland that rely on polluted water sources. Country representative Peter Penner from Winnipeg says that villagers see the need for clean water as a top priority.

There have been more requests for help with finding a clean water source than originally expected, Kemp writes. "We have been building projects faster than first planned. People are working hard on these projects when they see what the community down the road has."

Women provide much of the labor for the water projects. Swazi women are responsible for supplying water for their families and often must haul water from several miles during the dry season. Penner writes that since they are the obvious beneficiaries of the water projects, "They are out there, both at the initial planning meetings and later when the work begins, to make sure that something will actually be done."

The communities are asked to supply labor for the project as well as partial financing. Although some communities have resisted fulfilling their part of the bargain, Biel reports that "these problems are minimized where there are strong community or church leaders who supervise the village's participation." Community support is also enhanced when leaders see other working projects in the area and are inspired by the possibility of a water project in their own communities. One measure taken to ensure the communities' financial contribution was insisting that the community pay half of the money before construction was begun and the rest when the project was half completed.

Left to right: Gary T. Haller, Frank Keller, Laurie A. Haller

Laurie Hartzel Haller was ordained into the Christian ministry at Zion Mennonite Church, Souderton, Pa., on Nov. 21. She is pastor of Ogdensburg United Methodist Church, Traverse City, Mich. Her husband, Gary T. Haller, is associate pastor of Central United Methodist Church in Traverse City. Laurie Haller graduated from Wittenberg (West Germany) University in 1976 with a bachelor's degree in sacred music. She received a master's degree in music from Yale University School of Music in 1978 and a Master of Divinity degree from Yale Divinity School in 1980. Frank Keller, Western District Conference minister, conducted the ordination.

The Reagan administration last September approved selling 500 electric shock batons to the government of South Korea. Similar to cattle prods, the devices give a high-voltage, non-lethal shock. South Korea supposedly wants the batons for "crowd control." Human rights groups charge that South Korea uses such batons for torture and interrogation.

RECORD

CALENDAR

Jan. 14-16 — Brethren-Mennonite Bible conference, Hutchinson, Kan.
Jan. 21-22 — MCC (Canada) annual meeting, Saskatoon
Jan. 24-29 — Pastor's workshop, AMBS, Elkhart
Jan. 27 — MCC U.S., Harrisonburg, Va.
Jan. 28-29 — MCC annual meeting, Harrisonburg, Va.
March 4-7 — Council of Commissions, Newton, Kan.

Canada

Feb. 3-5 — CMC Council of Boards, Winnipeg
Feb. 11-13 — Conference of Mennonites in British Columbia, Clearbrook
Feb. 18-19 — Conference of Mennonites in Manitoba, Winnipeg
Feb. 18-20 — Conference of United Mennonite Churches of Ontario, Virgil
Feb. 25-26 — Conference of Mennonites in Saskatchewan, Swift Current
March 4-6 — Mennonite Marriage Encounter, Niagara Falls, Ont.
March 11-12 — Conference of Mennonites in Alberta, Calgary

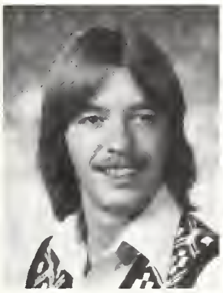
Central

Jan. 28-30 — Mennonite Marriage Encounter, Archbold, Ohio
April 7-10 — Central District Conference, Pandora, Ohio

Western

Feb. 25-27 — Mennonite Marriage Encounter, Concordia, Kan.
March 21-25 — Project: Teach, North Newton, Kan.

MINISTERS



Derksen

Wikerd

Bill Derksen has become youth pastor of Peace Church, Richmond, B.C., for an initial term of one year.

Henry and *Helen Dueck* have accepted the pastorate of Charleswood Church, Winnipeg, as co-pastors beginning in early January. The Duecks have spent four terms in South America, where Henry was a teacher at the Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Montevideo, Uruguay, until the time of its closing. They have been studying at Princeton (N.J.) Theological Seminary.

Lance Eisele, who has been serving as associate interim pastor at Zion Church, Souderton, Pa., will become assistant pastor at First Church, Aberdeen, Idaho, on Jan. 15. He is a graduate of Messiah College, Grantham, Pa., and studied at Westminster Theological Seminary, Philadelphia.

Les Klassen has accepted the call of Mountainview Church, Vancouver, to become the pastor in January. For the past 5½ years he has been outreach minister of the congregation.

John Sprunger has begun serving as pastor at Bethel Church, Cordell, Okla., in January. He previously served in the pastorate at East Swamp Church, Quakertown, Pa., Church of the Good Samaritan, Holland, Pa., and Indian Valley Church, Harleysville, Pa.

John Unrau has accepted the call of Cedar Hills Church, Surrey, B.C., to become their pastor in January. He completed his studies at Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., in December. Previously he served as pastor at Tofield (Alta.) Church from 1975-80.

Paul Wikerd was installed as pastor at Bethel Church, Lancaster, Pa., on Nov. 14. He served previously at First Church, Allentown, Pa., and Kempton (Pa.) Fellowship.

WORKERS

Helen and *John Bartel*, Eden Church, Chilliwack, B.C., are beginning a one-year term with Mennonite Central Committee in Neuburg, Germany, where they will work with resettling refugees. John has a degree in agricultural engineering from Höhere Landbauschule in Elbing, West Germany.

Gerhard Enns, Sargent Avenue Church, Winnipeg, is beginning a two-year assignment with MCC in British Columbia. He will work as a counselor at 100-Mile House. He has worked as an electrician. His parents are Peter and Kathe Enns of Winnipeg.

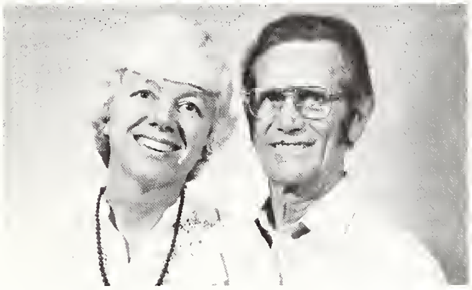
Juanita and *Walter Epp*, Tiefengrund Rosenort Church, Laird, Sask., will serve a three-year MCC term in Yugoslavia, where they will do study service. Both have been teachers at Rosthern (Sask.) Junior College and were pastors at Tiefengrund Rosenort Church. During the last year they studied at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Ind. Their parents are W. W. and A. G. (Walker) Ross of St. Paul, Alta., and Peter C. and Elizabeth Epp of Rosthern.

Gail and *Steve Erickson*, First Church, Mountain Lake, Minn., are returning for their third term with MCC in Nepal, where they will serve three years work-

The Bethel College nursing department has received an eight-year maximum accreditation from the National League of Nursing, according to Julia Quiring, director of nursing at the North Newton, Kan., school. The accreditation is the culmination of program development activities over the past three years.

At the fall 1982 capping/chevroning ceremony of the 1984 Bethel College nursing class, Susan Kehler, assistant professor of nursing, presents Treva Hartman of Carlsbad, N.M., with her cap.

In September Wieke Theresia van der Velden of Amsterdam, Netherlands, began an eight-month assignment with Mennonite Central Committee as European peace committee representative in North America. She is based at MCC's Akron (Pa.) headquarters and will travel throughout the eastern half of the United States and in some parts of Canada. The peace work assignment follows a 1979 recommendation by European Mennonites for an exchange of "ambassadors" between Mennonites in Europe and North America. Last year Hans Joachim Wienss was the first European to fill this position.

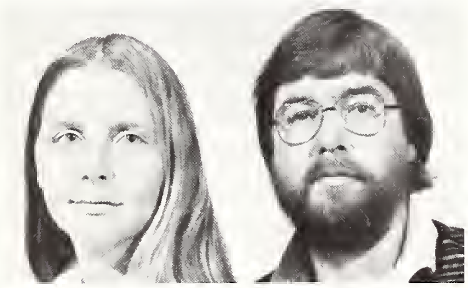


Bartels

Enns

Friesen

Geissingers



Epps

Eriksons

Froese

Heinrichs

ing in village development. Gail has a bachelor's degree in elementary education from Mankato (Minn.) State University. Steve has a bachelor's degree in health education from Mankato State University, and has attended Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Ind. Their parents are Henry Mike and Elizabeth Harder of Mountain Lake and Gerald and Marcella Erickson of Roseville, Minn.

Ivan W. Friesen, Bethesda Church, Henderson, Neb., has begun a two-year term working with the MCC meat canner in Akron, Pa. He has an associate degree in production agriculture from Hesston (Kan.) College. He is the son of Henry B. and Estaline M. Quiring of Henderson.

Al Froese, Martensville, Sask., has begun a one-year term with MCC in Jamaica as a SALT (Serve and Learn Together) International volunteer. A recent graduate of Rosthern (Sask.) Junior College, he will do maintenance and construction work in an orphanage. He is the son of Rudy and Mary Froese of Martensville.

Arlene and *Glenn Geissinger*, Faith Church, Minneapolis, will serve two years with MCC in Minneapolis working as unit leaders. They have done youth work with Mennonite Voluntary Service in Markham, Ill. Arlene, who has worked as an adoptions social worker, will continue part time in social work. She has a master's degree in social work from the University of Minnesota. Glenn, who was a vocational rehabilitation educator, has a master's degree in religious studies from United Theological Seminary in New Brighton, Minn. Their parents are Marvin and Anna Nickel of Mountain Lake, Minn., and Norman and Mianna Geissinger of Jackson, Minn.

Donna Heinrichs, Bethel Church, Winnipeg, is serving two years with MCC in Atlanta as a speech therapist at the Cerebral Palsy Center. She has a bachelor's degree in speech pathology and audiology from the University of Alberta, Edmonton. She is the daughter of Cornelius and Esther Heinrichs of Winnipeg.

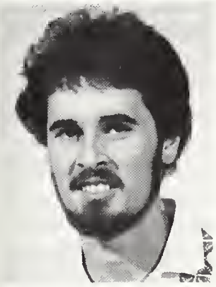
David Kreider, Faith Church, Newton, Kan., has begun a year of service with MCC in Atlanta working as an environmental educator. He has a bachelor's degree in environmental studies from

The community of the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries in Elkhart, Ind., was saddened on Dec. 3 by the death of Justin David Bell, the 3-year-old son of students David and Marlene Bell. Justin died of bacterial meningitis. The funeral service was held Dec. 7 at Pine Grove Mennonite Church, Stryker, Ohio, with burial at Pettisville (Ohio) Cemetery. At a memorial service at the seminary chapel, David said, "Justin knows who Jesus is now, better than any Bible scholar or theologian here. Justin showed me without a doubt that death is destroyed." The Bells have another son, Matthew, age 6.

Just back from leading a tour to the Middle East, *The Mennonite* editor Bernie Wiebe may have unpacked his bags but he's not putting his suitcases up into the attic. Wiebe plans to lead a Menno Travel "Discover Your Heritage" tour to the Soviet Union and Finland next summer. Plans include visits to relatives and churches in Karaganda and Alma Ata, the former Mennonite communities in Zaporozhie before a special stay at the famous Yalta Crimean resort. The tour, arranged by Menno Travel's Winnipeg office, will take place June 26-July 16.

Sisters Pat Mahoney and Marie Nord were convicted on Nov. 10 of criminal trespass and forgery for entering the Rocky Flats Plant, a nuclear weapons facility outside Denver, by using false employee badges and then erecting signs and a black flag near the plutonium building. A federal judge imposed maximum five-year prison sentences on the two on Nov. 22, but suspended all but six months. Mahoney and Nord are serving their sentences in federal prisons at Pleasanton, Calif., and Fort Worth, Tex., respectively.

RECORD



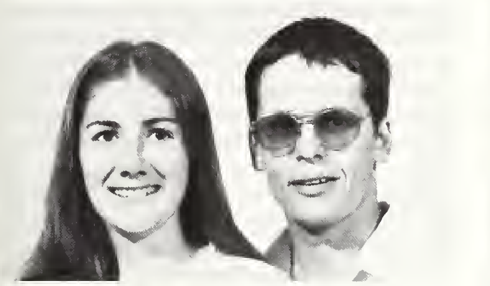
Kreider

Matthies

Redekops

Tiessen

Yoder



Loewens

Schroeder

Sawatsky

Bethel College, North Newton, Kan. He is the son of Robert S. and Lois Sommer Kreider of North Newton.

Ron and *Brenda Loewen*, Eigenheim Church, Rosthern, Sask., will serve three years with MCC in Indonesia, where he will do agriculture extension work and she will work in the field of nutrition. Formerly Ron farmed in Rosthern after attending Goshen (Ind.) College. Brenda majored in home economics at Goshen College, the University of Manitoba and the University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon. Their parents are Walter and Eleanor Loewen of Winnipeg and Frank and Margaret Wiebe of Aberdeen, Sask.

David Matthies, Mount Royal Church, Saskatoon, has begun a year of service with the MCC SALT International program in Paraguay, where he will be involved in church and school ministries in Kolonie Neuland. He is the son of Neil and Ann Matthies of Martensville, Sask.

Fred and *Shirley J. Redekop*, Bethany Church, Virgil, Ont., and Hinkletown Church, Ephrata, Pa., respectively, will serve three years with MCC in Thailand working with refugee concerns in Panat Nakhom. Fred has a bachelor's degree in history and English from Trent University, Peterborough, Ont., and studied last year at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Ind. Most recently he was assistant pastor at Bethany Church in Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ont. Shirley has worked with preschool handicapped children. Their parents are David and Annie Redekop of Niagara-on-the-Lake and Aaron Z. and Elva J. Stauffer of Ephrata.

Brigette Schroeder, Sherbrooke Church, Vancouver, has begun a one-year term with MCC SALT International in Paraguay working in social services. She is the daughter of Alfred and Anna Schroeder of Vancouver.

Loretta Sawatsky, Oak Lake (Man.) Church, has begun a one-year term as a SALT International volunteer in Botswana. She has a bachelor's degree in music and English from the University of Manitoba, Winnipeg. She is the daughter of Jake and Rosie Sawatsky of Oak Lake.

Sophie Tiessen, Sherbrooke Church, Vancouver, has begun a one-year term as a SALT International volunteer in Zimbabwe. She will be secretary for the Brethren in Christ Church in Zimbabwe. She majored in biblical studies and music while at Columbia Bible Institute, Clearbrook, B.C. Her parents are Heinrich and Katharina Tiessen.

Vernelle Yoder, First Church, Berne, Ind., returned for a three-month North America assignment for COM on Sept. 30. She has served in Colombia since 1953. There she works as a mission treasurer, adviser for primary schools, organizer of Sunday school curriculum and Christian education director.

Zion Church at Donnellson — one of the first

Tim Rhodes

In May 1860 at West Point, Iowa, meetings were held by the Zion and West Point Mennonite churches, which John Oberholtzer and three other eastern Mennonites attended. These meetings were the founding of the General Conference Mennonite Church. Of the two sponsoring congregations, West Point was closed around 1890. Zion Mennonite, now located in Donnellson, Iowa, is alive and mindful of its place in history.

Zion began with immigrants who settled in Lee County after 1851. These Mennonites were different in experiences and outlook from other American Mennonites. Many of the Zion families trace their ancestry to the Palatinate in Germany and the village of Weierhof and its vicinity to which they had fled from Switzerland.

In the fall of 1851, these new settlers began holding services in a schoolhouse. They were led by Henry Ellenberger. May 20, 1852, saw the first baptism — four people. In January 1853 they began sharing the German Evangelical Church on alternate Sundays with its owners. On Nov. 5, 1853, they organized and adopted a constitution (the need for a constitution was one point over which the Oberholtzer group broke away) in which they called themselves Evangelical Mennonites. Membership had grown to 35 families and a decision was made to build a church in order to meet every Sunday. The project was started in the summer of 1854 on a 1¼-acre plot given by John Kraemer. The church, made of rough stone and situated outside of Donnellson, was dedicated on Oct. 21, 1855.

In 1860 Zion lost some members to the newly formed Summerville, Ill., congregation. Soon after this, many members moved west, seeking cheap land. The West Zion Mennonite Church in Moundridge, Kan., was formed by Zion members who settled in Kansas.

A significant and cherished part of Zion's history is tied to Christian Schowalter, whose nickname was *Der Lehrer* (the teacher). Schowalter was 22 when he immigrated to America in 1850 and 25 when he came to Donnellson to become the teacher for the Zion congregation's school. While at Zion he served as teacher, minister, notary public and doctor. In 1867 he started the first Mennonite Women's Missionary Society, which is still in existence. He started Zion's first Sunday school in 1878. He was the first secretary of the General Conference, serving in that capacity for 46 years. He served on the Foreign Mission Board for 42 years. He wrote a German catechism and helped write a handbook for ministers for the General Conference. He died in 1907.

Zion Church stands at Donnellson as a clear reminder of GC beginnings.

From 1853 to 1918 the congregation sponsored a German school where students, Evangelical German Reformed as well as Mennonite, received scholastic as well as musical and religious instruction in German.

In 1880 the congregation built a new church due to the deterioration of their original building. Stones from the old church were used in the new building, which was just to the northwest of the original. This building lasted until 1908.

In 1868 Zion participated in the formation of the Western District and in 1888 the Middle District.

As some of the older members were retiring to town and the church was becoming too small, it was decided in 1908 to build a new church in Donnellson. The new building was constructed on what was almost barren farmland at the extreme north end of town. This building is still in use, having been remodeled in 1951 and 1982. In 1920 a parsonage was built. In 1949 a rural schoolhouse was moved in from the country to become Zion's fellowship center.

In 1970, Zion and the Donnellson United Presbyterian Church agreed to share a pastor. Since that time they have been known as the Mennonite-Presbyterian Yoked Fellowship. The union has strengthened both congregations and allowed them to better serve God.

Zion Mennonite Church can lay claim to being, if not the oldest General Conference church, one of the oldest. The other founding congregation, West Point, no longer exists.

Since 1970 the Mennonite-Presbyterian Yoked Fellowship has continued a strong witness in a small community.

...byterian Chu...
JOINT SERVICES
MENNONITE - PRESBYTERIAN
SUNDAY SCHOOL 9:30 AM
WORSHIP 10:30 AM

MKs — where do they belong?

Marion Keeney Preheim

"The major tension missionary children have to face is the conflict between our experiences overseas and what we have to confront when we return here," says Meribeth Sprunger, the Commission on Overseas Mission's secretary for mission communications.

She was born and grew up in Taiwan. Her parents, Hugh and Janet Sprunger, were COM missionaries there and now serve in Hong Kong.

How can we better understand persons who have lived in another culture in a missionary setting? One way is to learn what their situation is like rather than stereotyping them.

Sprunger describes what life is often like for missionary children: "The nuclear family is usually an important strength in the midst of mobility and change," she says. "So family becomes important. Because you have an interdependence, it is hard to leave them.

"However, as missionary kids we also develop an independence. There is a preparation for leaving home to go to college. You have observed how your parents separated from their family."

She says that missionary parents have an attachment to the United States and Canada that their children do not have. "I was much closer to other missionaries than to blood relatives. We called them aunts and uncles. I felt relatively close to my grandparents, but this is not true with everyone. It takes time."

The kind of lifestyle missionary children experience may also cause conflict, Sprunger says. Overseas they are ordinarily on a higher living standard than the people there. They see what it means to be poor. They have the tension of asking themselves, "Do we have too much?" and with that comes a certain guilt.

Yet when they come to the United States and Canada the wealth they see is overwhelming and they may become critical. "Sometimes when I feel I am adjusting to a higher lifestyle here," Sprunger says, "I become critical of others because I don't like what I see in myself."

Missionary children have many opportunities in terms of culture, language and travel. The environment in which they learn is educational.

For example, many attend school among children of the middle and upper-middle class, not the typical mixture of public schools at home. Most come from homes of well-educated parents who are doing pioneering sorts of things. This often results in highly competitive situations. As a result, most of them are high achievers.

"Missionaries themselves are almost a different culture," Sprunger says. "They have their denominational lines, but overseas there is less emphasis on those. We absorbed Mennonitism at home, but for me it was more religious than ethnic. For example, the church would have a sukiyaki dinner (Japanese meal) on Christmas rather than German/Swiss ethnic food."

"Missionary kids . . . develop an independence," says Meribeth Sprunger, herself an MK.

The overseas church also affects missionary children's outlooks. The churches are often small, and some struggle financially. Pastors usually supplement their income with other work.

"You see the inequality in the global village," Sprunger says. "And yet you realize there is so much give and take. Out of their little they will give so much. You have a sense that they will look out for you."

But missionary children have to get used to the idea that established relationships there must end. Graduation has a finality that students at home do not experience in the same way. The chances of getting together again are unlikely because of distance.

So missionary children must learn to adjust again to the West. They find that they are considered different. At times Sprunger experienced changes in people's attitudes when they learned she was from a missionary setting.

One of the barriers is that people consider missionary children more conservative religiously. For some that may be true, she says, but the tendency is to stereotype all of them.

She found a need for getting together with others from an overseas setting. At Taylor University, which she attended, there was an international group. "We would laugh together," she said. "We were missionary kids who were viewed as different, but we had so much in common."

At Thanksgiving time she went to Chicago for reunions of missionary children who had been in Taiwan. They cooked Chinese meals and reminisced about their experiences.

But she still needed to be a part of the culture here. "For the long-term missionary our greatest vulnerability is our sense of belonging," Sprunger says. "I have always experienced acceptance, but that isn't the same as feeling like you belong."

How can people here help them to feel more at home? Sprunger gives several suggestions. Talk about interests that are held in common, like sports, music and hobbies. Treat them like any other member of the community rather than as guests. Include them in the ordinary things and not just on special occasions. Allow them to be who they are and to express their varied experiences. "Missionaries come in different stripes too," she says.

Sprunger is affirmative of her experience overseas. "Even with the struggles we as missionary kids had, I would choose to do it again. There are a lot of second generation missionaries. There's something that draws me overseas, but people here are also good to me. I find my sense of belonging with people and not places."

Marion Keeney Preheim, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, is a staff writer for the General Conference's news service.

film

Fathers and sons, heart and mind

The Chosen, *directed by Jeremy Paul Kagan, produced by Edie and Ely Landau, screenplay by Edwin Gordon*

Reviewed by Gordon Houser, editorial assistant for The Mennonite

In a review of Chaim Potok's novel *In the Beginning* (*The Mennonite*, Oct. 12, 1976), Elizabeth Yoder says the novel "has a theme which is as applicable to Christians as it is to Jews. . . . We can learn something about our own attitudes toward the Bible and about the ways we must approach it in the 20th century."

The Chosen, based on Potok's first novel, takes up a similar theme, though it doesn't discuss the Bible per se. But it does portray the conflict between a Jewish boy and his father, between the mores of a conservative religious group and modern Western culture, between compassion and intelligence.

Danny Saunders (played superbly by Robby Benson) is a member of the Hasidim, a Jewish mystical sect founded in Poland about 1750 in opposition to rationalism and ritual laxity. His father (Rod Steiger) is the rabbi of their group, having led them from Russia to New York City. Danny, who is chosen to inherit his father's position, has an extraordinary ability to recall what he reads. He meets Reuven Malter (Barry Miller), another Jewish boy, and they become friends.

The two boys introduce one another to their respective worlds, and we as viewers observe with Reuven the vibrant, joyous devotion of Hasidic Jews in New York in the 1940s, while Danny struggles with his desire to broaden his learning beyond the Talmud.

But what focuses most sharply is the relationships of the fathers and sons. Each son loves his father, but their relationships are very different. Reuven, whose mother is dead, talks frequently and amiably with his father (Maximilian Schell), while Reb Saunders refuses to speak directly to Danny, though he communicates with him through others.

The various conflicts that arise between the ways of the Hasidim and the ways of Jews much more involved in the affairs of the broader culture and political scene are portrayed movingly in the friendship of the two boys. The action is well-paced and developed as the plot moves toward the climactic meeting of father and son, and a kind of synthesis of heart and mind takes place, both embraced by love.

Mennonites (and others) who have experienced the tension of their ethnicity in conflict with modern Western culture, especially where the tension has involved the relationship of parents and children, can relate well to *The Chosen*. But for anyone, it is a moving story of father and son brought together by love and forgiveness.

The movie has no objectionable scenes, though the themes may be too complicated for children.

Addendum: Just for fun, and if you're looking for good films (though some may be hard to find), here are the 10 best films I saw in 1982:

1. Diner
2. Reds
3. Chariots of Fire
4. Diva
5. Gregory's Girl
6. The Chosen
7. Missing
8. Das Boot
9. My Dinner with Andre
10. On Golden Pond

MUSIC

Calling bad bad

On the Other Hand, *by Chuck Neufeld (Charlesongs, 1982)*

Reviewed by Jean Garvin, Mennonite Voluntary Service worker, 13315 Pleasant Valley Road, Woodstock, IL 60098

Chuck Neufeld
On the other hand...

On the Other Hand by Chuck Neufeld is a new album on an independent label that folk music buffs won't want to miss. It has a nice, easy mix of voice, guitar and mandolin and should have its greatest appeal to those who frequent coffeehouses.

Neufeld, associate director of Mennonite Voluntary Service, wrote all the music and lyrics for this his second album except one Stephen Foster song. The lyrics show a strongly biblical approach to social issues. They ring with hope, the kind of hope that knows what it's up against in today's world. The lead song on side two says, "Calling bad bad ain't so bad." This line surfaces as the theme of the record, and in pointing out bad, Neufeld, in a strong yet gentle way, points his audience toward hope.

The highlight of the album is the love song "Count on My Love." This is the song in which Neufeld's faith, music and voice blend into a truly beautiful, passionate song.

Both *On the Other Hand* and Neufeld's first album, *Ropes and Yoke-bars*, are available from MVS, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, for $6.99 each, plus $1 for postage and handling.

MEDITATION

Resolution

The new year dawns;
how we resolve to face it
will determine our direction and
purpose.
We can spend our time
looking back with longing
reluctant to relinquish the past
and thus, like Lot's wife, become
immobilized
or, like the people of Israel,
use the lessons of the past
to remind ourselves of God's
faithfulness
or again, like Paul, forgetting
those things which are behind
we can press forward to new
goals
We can look ahead
like Abraham, who leaving the known behind
ventured forth into a new land
without the security of a map in his
hand
like Jesus, who came quoting
the Old laws but giving us
New ways to relate to God and to each
other.
For what person, having put hand
to the plow and looked back,
is fit for the kingdom of
God?

Louise Dueck

I held the Christ child

Lethargic with self-pity
I had no thought of the Christ child.
A year of bitter memories had left me
as cold as the Christmas snow
and my child was testing me
feeling that I was ready to break.
The childish act of defiance was the last straw
and a torrent of anger shrieked from my mouth.
I watched him cringe in fear as the words —
ugly, thoughtless words poured from my soul.
Hurling my anger of injustice at childhood innocence
I attacked my son.
Later when my anger subsided he came to me — fearfully —
and said
I forgive you.
I had not asked, presumptuous child.
He knew that I needed his mercy
even when I was too guilty to ask.
I knelt and held him weeping
holding his body
holding the Christ child.

Diane Mierau Buller

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Here is our first issue for the new year. We have tried to put together inspiration (the first article follows up our lead article of a year ago), a review of some headlines in 1982, a challenge to the business community from a Christian economist, some reflections about being the Body of Christ (Don Fry, a pastor, helps us) and a visit to congregations (by the Zehrs).

We hope and pray that this New Year's edition will inspire and challenge you as it did us in its preparation. The editor found his stimulation at a used car lot; God is everywhere present — praise him.

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EdiTORiAL

Catholic used car dealer preaches to Protestants

Our second car is a '68 Mustang. Its age makes it expensive to maintain. So I'd gone several times to one used car dealer about selling the Mustang.

Now, several months later, I went to him again. I didn't expect him to remember. But as I stood before him, he said, "You are a Mennonite; you work for the church. Mennonites are good people. But I won't buy your car."

He sounded so final, I turned to leave.

"Hey," he said, "I don't talk religion with customers but I want to talk to you. My wife has a good Mennonite friend."

I was unable to go because he sounded urgent.

"My sister has been a nun for 27 years and I learn quite a bit from her," he said. "You Protestants — I know there are different kinds and maybe Mennonites are better than most — don't think much of us Catholics, do you? No, no, don't tell me different; it's true. Protestants think we are dumb and do only what the priest tells us to do. You think we Catholics have no minds of our own."

There was no way he was going to let me interrupt.

"Well, because you're a good guy and because I like Mennonites, I'm going to tell you what I think. You know what I think? I think you Protestants need to learn from us Catholics."

There was no pause.

"I see a lot of anger and mistrust among Protestants. Even more than among us Catholics. You know why that is? I'll tell you. It's clear as can be."

This could be custom-designed for Mennonites, I thought. I wondered if he knew more about us than I realized.

"The key to the Bible's teachings is forgiveness. You and I need forgiveness for our sins — against God and other people. And we need to give up those sins. Isn't that right?

"Well, you Protestants don't know anything about forgiveness. Come on, you pray privately for God to forgive and for everyone else to forgive. Forgive what? Tell me that.

"From the time I went to my first confession, I've had to *name* my sins. And it isn't easy to name my sins to the priest. But when I do it, it makes a difference. I now know that God knows exactly what's bothering me and that already gives me a new start. Besides, how often will I dare to tell the priest I sinned again the same way?"

My mind was playing tricks on me. All this from a used car dealer?

"When did you last name your sins as you asked forgiveness from God and from people you work with? You Protestants are a joke. Forgiveness you want but you want it for nothing. You tell God nothing. You tell your preachers nothing. You fight your church members rather than tell them anything. Sin is sin and it doesn't go away in general. It only goes when you name it in particular. I know because it's happened often in my life."

Every spiritual sense in my being was alert now. This Catholic layman was speaking profound spiritual truth.

Jesus implied a similar truth when he said, "So every one who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven. . ." (Matthew 10:32). It's not enough to act like a Christian; you and I have to "name the Name." We must feel free enough to speak what we believe.

And it's not enough to pray in general for forgiveness. Name the sin before God and before our spiritual brothers and sisters. Then that sin can be dealt with.

This Catholic used car dealer finally wound down a bit. "I don't see much hope for Protestants to improve this world unless they quit *playing* religion. There is no forgiveness among your people because you go at it the wrong way."

I made my New Year's resolution that day. With God's help I want to be more honest in naming my sins as I seek forgiveness.

Church in a used car lot; I hadn't counted on it. A Catholic sermon "right on" for Mennonites. Lord, help us to name our sins — confess them — and become freer in 1983.

(Now, what shall I do with the Mustang — sell or keep on fixing? Maybe next time I should go see a Protestant used car dealer. I might get a sermon on when to buy and when to sell. Or I might get another beautiful sermon where least expected.) *Bernie Wiebe*

THE MENNONITE

OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST

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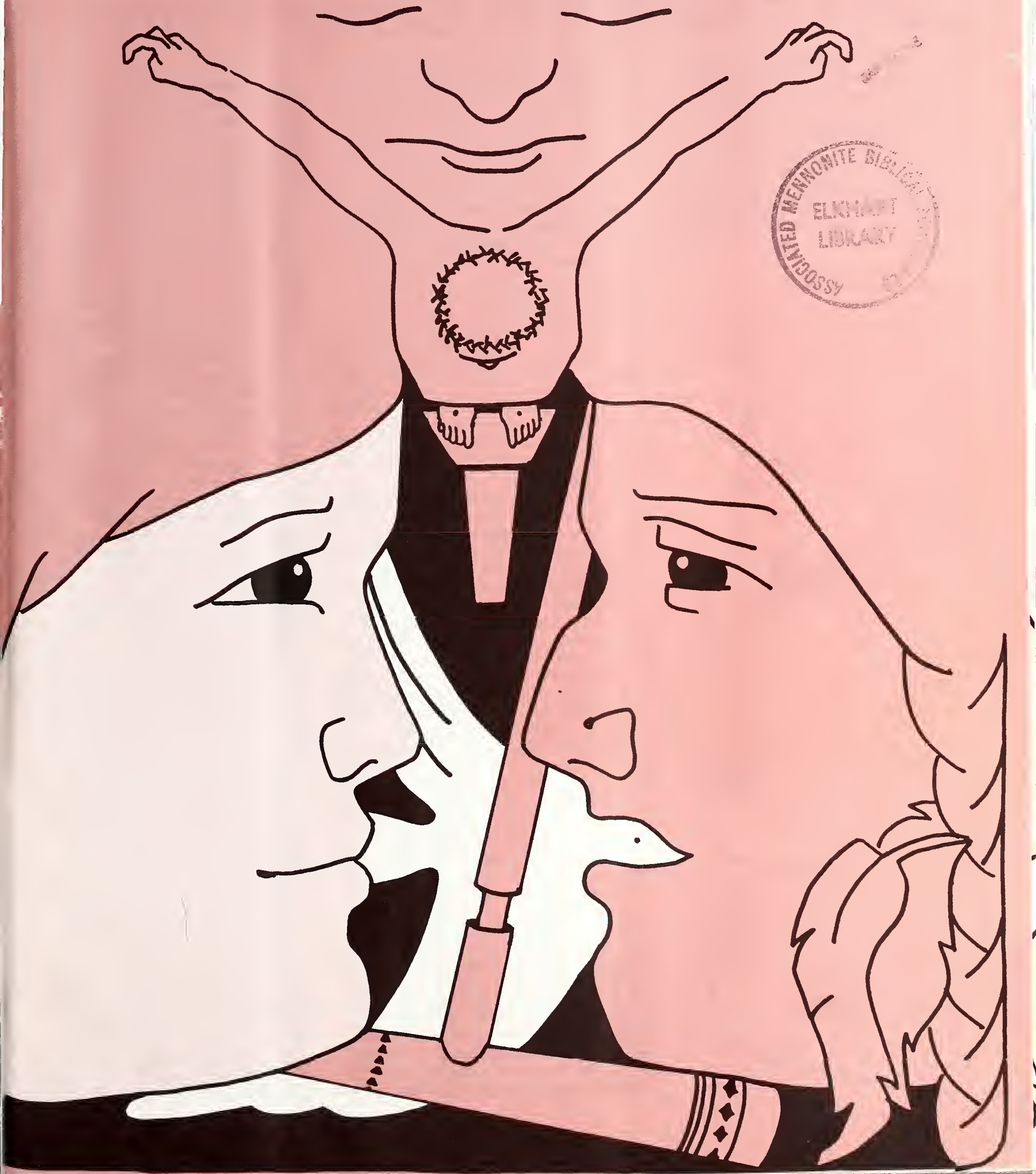


Doug Goodwin

Let's share the Gospel with nat

The cold wind pierces the black coat of the young minister — hardly out of seminary — as he finishes reading the short monologue for the dead . . . "from dust to dust, ashes to ashes, in sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life. . . ." Around the grave stands a throng of solemn faces staring at the ground. The minister closes his book. From the middle of the crowd steps a hardened, weather-creased man. He kneels beside the child-sized coffin, takes out a hand drill and bores a hole in the coffin lid. When finished he stands and, looking around him, speaks in an age-old language that is slowly falling into disuse. The people listen carefully. Slowly the coffin is lowered into the ground by four of the younger men present. Each member of the bereaved family throws a handful of dirt on top. Shovels leaning against a nearby tree are handed out and the men take turns scraping the bare earth into the grave. Before they are finished, a plate of cookies, candies and fruit is laid in a carefully formed hollow in the dirt, then covered over as the last shovelfuls of earth are put in place. Reverently it is packed into shape and covered with flowers brought by the girls and women. Nobody moves, nobody speaks until everything is completed. Then, with a last word of sympathy for the family, the throng drifts away.

Instead of a church witnessing to the love of Christ, native people can only see a church that is still "in cahoots" with a white culture which wants them to give up their own culture, their own life, and to enter a society which stands against them.

The scene described above would seem strange to many, but not to those who have lived or worked on an Indian reserve. The traditions might differ from place to place, but the reality is the same: native people have not abandoned their beliefs and practices. Many changes have been made through contact with the Christian church, but native culture lives on.

What does this mean for the Christian church on reserves? Not many years ago this question never would have arisen. Early in this century we were confidently being told that at their present mortality rate, soon all Indians would be dead. Even in the 1950s a church pamphlet stated that it was only a matter of time before Indians would be fully assimilated into the Canadian mainstream, disappearing as a distinct people.

Today, however, it is evident that Indians are *not* going to die away or abandon their culture. The confidence of earlier generations about the inevitable triumph of white over native culture is revealed today in its true colors — as blind and uncritical self-pride. In a new generation which looks askance at the self-proclaimed righteousness of those which went before it, there is a refreshing readiness to look at the cultural perseverance and strength of native people.

For the church, this new awareness means looking critically at what we are trying to achieve among native people. Should we be trying to establish congregations and a native clergy? Should we be helping native people slip more comfortably into the mainstream of white culture? Should we be preaching for conversions, plucking souls out of a sinful life? What should we do?

There have been *two* basic approaches which the church has taken in its history among native people. The *first* is more common to Roman Catholic work. A priest joined a native community and made it his home. As the priest became more and more accepted as a community member, so was the message he brought. It was not uncommon for whole native communities to become Catholic.

This approach worked best in isolated communities where white culture was present only in tiny parcels. In the hills of South America, Catholic priests protected native Indians from Spanish expansion until cheap, slave labor became a bigger requirement of the colonizers than Christian communities. For years the Catholic martyr de Brebeuf labored alone in isolated territories of Canada, meeting such success among the Hurons that today his name is remembered as an early Canadian hero.

In Metlakatla, in British Columbia, the Anglican William Duncan helped form an experimental native community centered on the Christian gospel. Even today there are visages of this approach left in the Canadian north among Catholics and Anglicans, but they are fast disappearing.

The *second* approach is the one most people are familiar with today and the one practiced by most Protestant churches. The aim was to convert as many "heathens" to Christ as possible, form them into congregations and push them into the cultural mainstream. In the 19th century, conversion to Christ meant conversion to white civilization. It is difficult at times to tell what the main strategy of the church's work with native people was — preaching the gospel so Indian people could accept "civilization" or forcing civilization upon them so they might more easily adopt the gospel. Whatever the method, the result was the same — native people were

From the Indian graveside to the massed choirs of First Mennonite Church downtown (anywhere) is a great distance.

e people

force-fed white culture. Boarding schools became a primary focus of the church’s outreach to Indians. There, children first heard the gospel preached and practiced — the gospel of white culture. At a recent conference in Winnipeg, a middle-aged woman explained quietly and tearfully how she first realized what Christianity meant when in a Christian boarding school she was slapped across the mouth for daring to speak her own language. Her experience was not unusual.

This second approach that the church has taken toward native people is certainly not dead today. The violent *extremes* it sometimes took are now almost completely gone, but the general philosophy remains. The formation of congregations made up of people “rescued” from the native community, dependent in structure, worship and continuity upon the white church, is still very much a goal. While the church as a whole is questioning its unholy alliance with the establishment of white society, among native people the alliance is being promoted with all speed. Native organizations go unheard in church circles; Indian governments on reserves are not allowed a say in the work of the church on their own reserves. They are not even consulted about who the next missionary will be. The white church is unwilling to relinquish the reins of power until native people fall into line — and that native people are refusing to do.

The second approach does not work, no matter what set of criteria is used to judge it. Instead of a church witnessing to the love of Christ, native people can only see a church that is still “in cahoots” with a white culture which wants them to give up their own culture, their own life, and to enter a society which stands against them.

If there is one mistake we can isolate from our past and present work with native people and learn from, it is our blindness to the importance of culture in Christian belief. The recognition that native people have a culture distinct from white, European culture has been seen from the start, but always as an obstacle to be broken down and demolished. Many missionaries studied Indian languages, customs, beliefs and traditions but almost always in order to exploit the mission field better and gain converts more quickly. Today the same practice is followed.

But if culture is taken seriously, it cannot be seen as a barrier — it is life itself. No person is free from cultural perspectives. Everyone — native and white — is molded by the culture in which they are raised. It is a part of who we are; it is what gives our life shape and form, meaning and direction. It is impossible even to imagine what a person would be like without culture. How could such a person talk or even think without the language and thought-forms derived from a particular culture? Culture is human life itself.

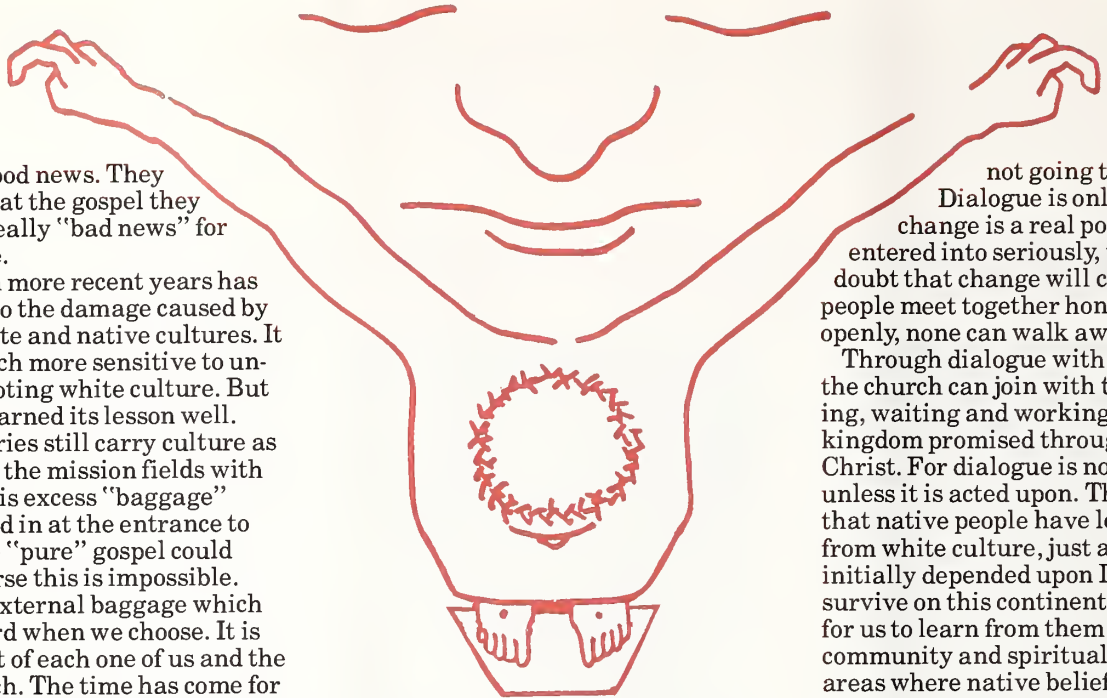
There is no Christian who is not first of all Indian or white or black or. . . . There is no gospel which is not Indian gospel, white gospel or any other cultural gospel. The apostle Paul recognized this in his own ministry to the Gentiles, the non-Jews (or as he likes to say, “the uncircumcised”). In Galatians 2:7-8 he writes, “I had been entrusted with ‘the gospel to the uncircumcised’ just as Peter had been entrusted with ‘the gospel to the circumcised’ (for he who worked through Peter for the mission to the circumcised worked through me also for the Gentiles).”

Why would Peter and Paul divide up the mission field between Jews and Gentiles? For strategic convenience? Wouldn’t a better, more manageable strategy have been to divide it up geographically? Or could it be that “the gospel for the uncircumcised” was a different message from “the gospel to the circumcised?” Could it be that Peter and Paul divided up the mission field because they had two different things to say to two different groups of people? The same God at their source but *unique* messages — it makes sense if the full significance of cultures is recognized.

The gospel has never been known apart from its form in particular cultures. Anybody picking up the Bible today realizes that without some understanding of the Jewish and Greek cultures it was written in, the words on the page are often more cryptic than revealing. In every age, in every place, the gospel has been proclaimed and practiced in the language, thought-forms and meanings of a particular culture.

There is an exception to this. People under the thumb of others never get the chance to hear the gospel in their own cultural form; they hear it only in the form of those who oppress them. It was the gospel of white culture which was preached to native people and in some cases forced upon them. Missionaries, blind to the importance of culture, thought they possessed the “pure, un-

In every age, in every place, the gospel has been proclaimed and practiced in the language, thought-forms and meanings of a particular culture.



adulterated" good news. They did not know that the gospel they preached was really "bad news" for another culture.

The church in more recent years has not been blind to the damage caused by the clash of white and native cultures. It has become much more sensitive to uncritically promoting white culture. But it has not yet learned its lesson well. Some missionaries still carry culture as "baggage" into the mission fields with them. If only this excess "baggage" could be checked in at the entrance to the reserve, the "pure" gospel could emerge. Of course this is impossible. Culture is not external baggage which we can disregard when we choose. It is an integral part of each one of us and the gospel we preach. The time has come for our church to face up to the fact that the gospel it preaches is cultural gospel. Our Christianity is white.

So what can the church do among native people?

First of all, we have to develop a strong understanding of the connection between culture and gospel. Then we have to take it seriously. No longer can we build up hopes and expectations among native people that are more appropriate to a white, commercial culture. No longer can we try to create congregations by imposing European forms upon native people.

Second, within our own culture and heritage, we have to develop a theology which will allow us to be ourselves and native peoples to be themselves — distinct peoples but under the same God. We have to find a way to be true to Paul's proclamation that in Christ there is a unity between Jew and Gentile, male and female, slave and free, each maintaining obvious and indissoluble distinctiveness, yet under the one God (Galatians 3:28).

Such a theology might start from the same point at which Jesus began, the proclamation of the kingdom of God. You will look in vain for any description of the kingdom in Jesus' preaching. He expected, quite naturally, that images of the kingdom would be drawn from the Jewish culture in which he preached and worked.

Our proclamation today might take the same form. The kingdom of God is that which we look toward as a goal and model for the way our Christian life should be lived now. We are accustomed to filling in all the details about it. We tell native people that for them it will mean clean houses, well-groomed children, getting off welfare, entering the job market and the consumer society. (In one mission it meant proclaiming the amazing advantages of disposable diapers over cloth ones.)

But perhaps we should take a clue from Jesus and begin to let native people fill in the details about the kingdom. We both know it is coming; we each know what form it will take for ourselves. Just as the Scriptures themselves describe the hope of Christians in a multitude of ways, we should accept a diversity of conceptions of the kingdom.

The second task leads directly into the **third**. If native people themselves are given freedom to understand and express the hope held out for them by God, then we can participate with them in that task only in the spirit of dialogue.

Dialogue is a dynamic process of communicating with another person. It means speaking passionately out of a deep commitment; it means listening carefully in order to understand and learn from the other. Dialogue takes into account the fact that our gospel is white, yet is willing to listen to a gospel which is Indian.

Risk is involved in dialogue — great risk — for the outcome of dialogue is not predetermined but arises from the dialogue itself. In other words, dialogue cannot be initiated by someone who knows, even before it begins, that one is not going to change.

Dialogue is only possible when change is a real possibility. If it is entered into seriously, there is little doubt that change will come; when people meet together honestly and openly, none can walk away unaffected.

Through dialogue with native people, the church can join with them in watching, waiting and working for the kingdom promised through Jesus Christ. For dialogue is not real dialogue unless it is acted upon. There is no doubt that native people have learned much from white culture, just as white culture initially depended upon Indian skills to survive on this continent. Now it is time for us to learn from them again. Ecology, community and spirituality are three areas where native beliefs have already provided a leaven to help us rethink our own beliefs and loyalties. There are many others. Native people are forcing us to examine our economic system, which keeps large numbers poor while the rich grow richer.

Dialogue is taking place between the church and native people — Project North is one example. But it is rare. We are still too content with white monologue, unheeding the fact that those who are not listened to will soon close their ears to our constant babble.

Dialogue needs to happen in every congregation, with every person. Native people must be heard, heard in every cry of the baby who goes hungry, in the despair and forsakenness of drunken eyes, in the militant manifesto of angry youths, in the patient yet persistent pleas of elders growing old.

So what is the church to do and be among native people? It is to be an attentive ear, to hear the voice of native people. It is to be a voice, to join with native people in search for what the kingdom of God means for them and for us. And it is to be hands and feet, working with zeal in shaping this world into the image of the kingdom of God.

From the Indian graveside to the massed choirs of First Mennonite Church downtown (anywhere) is a great distance. But the differences we see between these images do not create a chasm to be bridged or walls to be torn down. Rather, they witness to a God who cannot be confined to any one group or culture but is free to be the Lord of all peoples. •

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In my experience the clown figure invites us to imaginatively celebrate the presence of God's liberating love in this world by eliminating the distinctions which frighten us off and divide us from each other.

You can "clown around" for God

Brian Petkau

> The disciples sometimes sensed how "foolish" their claims appeared. "They knew they were fools for Christ, but they also claimed that the foolishness of God is wiser than the wisdom of men. Christ himself for them must have been something of a holy fool."
>
> Harvey Cox, *Feast of Fools*

For two years my wife and I lived in Washington while on assignment with Mennonite Central Committee. During this time I was introduced by a Church of the Saviour group to the real and vibrant dimension that the clown figure can give to the worship experience.

In my experience the clown figure invites us to imaginatively celebrate the presence of God's liberating love in this world by eliminating the distinctions which frighten us off and divide us from each other. The clown figure transcends and defies those categories which serve to distinguish individual from individual on the basis of age, sex, intelligence, wealth, race, religion, appearance or status. The clown figure, in not being party to these categories, invites and elicits responses from people which, when given, become occasions of joyous communion between the clown and that person. The apparent vulnerability of the clown invites individuals to set aside fears of themselves and of others, thus allowing for a moment of communion to be created — a creation often denied to those whose responses to each other are made on the basis of the different categories.

A number of personal experiences illustrate the above.

One hot, humid Washington night as I was returning in full clown makeup from a clown gathering at the Church of the Saviour, I had to drive down a narrow, one-way street in a predominantly black section of Washington. Because of the heat, most of the area residents were on the street visiting and playing. Just as I turned onto this street, one of the young blacks outside yelled down the

The apparent vulnerability of the clown invites individuals to set aside fears of themselves and of others, allowing for a moment of communion to be created.

street, "Hey, there's a clown inside this car." This message, passed on from one cluster of persons to the next, escorted me as I drove down this street, prompting people to wave, smile and make encouraging comments. A drive which I would normally have been reluctant to make as a white person, became the occasion for me to relate in a delightful way with the black people on that street. The clown figure served to transcend the difference in skin color — a distinction which frequently inhibits human encounter.

Toward the end of our stay in Washington I was asked by a number of more experienced clowns to work together with them as they led — as clowns — a communion service in church for 35 people labelled "mentally handicapped." In return for my giving to these handicapped people the communion elements, they gave to me, even as we both sought and experienced divine communion, the gift of their imaginative acceptance of me, thus inviting me to be in communion with them. The clown figure served to transcend differences in learning abilities — a distinction which frequently inhibits human encounter.

One summer while studying at Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Ind., I worked as chaplain in a large nursing home. While being tempted to come to the nursing home as a clown in an attempt to relate to the more senile residents, I hesitated to do so because of the feelings of apprehension I had as to what these older people might think of a clown.

One person in particular comes to mind as I recall the day I finally went as a clown to the nursing home. A woman whom I had not yet visited was sitting at the end of the hall in a wheelchair. As I approached her, she started to laugh and to point at me. She permitted me not only to gently stroke her hands as I held them, but also to take a picture of her making a face. I left her having especially fond memories of our meeting.

The next day, while at the nursing home as a "straight" chaplain, I visited her, looking forward to this visit. I entered the room and had no sooner introduced myself as a chaplain, than she asked me to leave. She told me in no uncertain terms that she did not wish to have any such pastoral visits. I was quite taken aback, thinking that I would be received in this visit as I had been received as a clown. But it was while a clown, and not as a traditional chaplain, that I was able to experience with her the richness of human communion. The clown figure served to transcend differences in age and in roles assumed — distinctions which frequently inhibit human encounter.

The central vision described in the biblical material is the vision of *shalom*, or well-being. The Bible abounds with descriptions — such as Isaiah 11:6-9 — of a time when all of God's creation will experience the harmony, unity and freedom which God intended. Divisions which now thwart the complete emergence of the shalom vision will at that time have disappeared.

A delightful story describes how the clown figure introduced such a shalom vision into the reality of today's world. In a particular town in a Midwestern state, the armed forces were exhibiting a display of weapons. Children were invited to participate in a weapons Olympics — of sorts — in which prizes were given to the youngster who could throw an inert hand grenade the farthest and/or with the greatest degree of accuracy. Skill tests also applied to other weapons.

A number of people in the town, disturbed by such an armed forces presence in their town, chose to go as clowns to the display area. As clowns they invited the children to come and play with them. The children came, leaving behind the weapons displays. Frisbees instead of hand grenades were now being thrown — with the end result that few people were left behind at the armed forces display.

Such is the power and the authority given to the clown to assist to usher in the holy completeness of God's kingdom. •

See God's galactic glory

Ken Peterson

One of the most beautiful sights on a clear summer night is the Milky Way, the haze of concentrated light crossing our sky. Actually, all of the stars we can see with the unaided eye belong to the Milky Way Galaxy of about 100 billion stars, some with their own solar systems. When we see what we call the Milky Way, we are really looking into the very center of this vast swirling galaxy. This is only the beginning, for our galaxy is only one of a cluster of more than 15 galaxies, and astronomers now estimate the entire universe to be about 10 billion galaxies of over 200 billion billion stars. The mere number of starry galaxies is glorious.

The galaxies are not only glorious because of the staggering numbers. They are also glorious because of the incomprehensible distances. Imagine yourself on a fantastic spaceship traveling about the speed of light — 186,000 miles per second. You leave the earth and reach the moon in less than two seconds. You travel away from our sun and reach Mars in about four minutes. Continuing top speed deeper into space, you pass Jupiter and Saturn, past Neptune and tiny Pluto to the edge of our solar system. You have now been traveling about five hours.

However, our solar system is but a pinhead in the vast expanses of the universe. You have yet to come close to the nearest star, which you reach in about four years. In about 120,000 years you finally reach two small neighboring galaxies. For 20 million more years you journey until you reach another cluster of galaxies. Eventually you come to the end of our galactic universe, where you are dazzled by unusually bright galaxies called quasars, about 10 billion light years from earth. You wonder, "How incomprehensible are the distances of our galactic universe!" You ponder, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth" (Genesis 1:1). You exclaim with the psalmist of old, "The heavens declare the glory of God" (Psalm 19:1a).

The multitude and the distances of our galactic universe can cause our hearts to recognize the overwhelming glory of God. These things point to the even greater glory of God who created them.

The most popular theory among scientists — and many theologians — of the process of the development of the universe is the "big-bang" theory. Perhaps 10 to 20 billion years ago the universe began by the explosion of an original fireball. The scientific evidence for this theory is that the galaxies are moving away from each other, and the entire sky gives off radio waves, thought to be the result of this original explosion.

It is possible that in the beginning God created a giant fireball which contained all the matter and energy of our universe. This energy and matter may then have purposefully exploded, formed gaseous clumps which broke up into stars, and the stars formed solar systems. About 5 billion years ago the earth may have been in a primitive, formless shape. At this point the Scripture says, "And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters" (Genesis 1:2). In this gaseous form there was darkness within this cloudy earth. As the gas cloud condensed, it eventually heated up to the point that it began to glow, so that there was within the cloudy earth — light.

"And God said, Let there be light: and there was light" (Genesis 1:3). God is the author of light. Light is the glory of our universe. Because stars are giant lamps in the sky, astronomers have been able to actually photograph, through high-powered telescopes, many galaxies of light. Imagine the light that must be generated by the billions of galaxies.

Look up into the galactic glory of the heavens and know that God's light is shining. Wherever you are, wherever you go, there is always a star to shine on you. Look up into the face of God and see light, and know you are not alone. You are a child of light. God will give you glorious life-giving light. *Second in a series*

Ken Peterson is pastor of the First Mennonite Church, 379 N. Campus Ave., Upland, CA 91786.

Washington bureaucrat visits Winnipeg

Bernie Wiebe

"Strengthening the family life of our nations begins with individuals — especially men who take leadership seriously — making a personal commitment to Jesus Christ," Jerry Regier, a conservative evangelical in charge of the U.S. government's Office for Families, told 800 people at the annual Christian Business Men banquet in Winnipeg on Nov. 22. "Too many businessmen have done a good job at earning a living, but done poorly at learning how to live. . . . They have no peace. . . . They live lives of quiet desperation. . . . They need the sanctuary of fellowship with Jesus Christ and the Bible in the midst of today's chaotic world."

This reporter was granted an interview with Regier prior to the banquet.

Jerry, what brought you to work for President Reagan?

I participated in the 1980 White House Conference on the Family and was one of 120 National Task Force on the Family members who drafted the outcomes. A minority group of 17 — of which I was one — proposed preventive family nurture programs, access to effective programs even if they come from churches, and emphasis on strengthening family responsibility. This was contrary to majority concern for more funding to do more things for fragments of families. When the Office for Families was established by the Reagan administration, I was asked to become its head.

How do you see your position in light of the reality that most of the families needing help are actually fragmented families?

Yes, 90 percent of the families we help are "fractured" in terms of the time-tested nuclear family. The White House Conference and past efforts have usually responded mainly to the direct problems.

That seems a shortsighted approach. We want to look down the road and build some preventive foundations.

Our aim is to work at families from a parental viewpoint. Many social programs create greater dependence and conflict with parental roles. I'm not afraid to work with single-parent families and to speak of "familial" needs for all people. But let's help people feel the support of this primary institution.

Jerry Regier tells businessmen that it's more important to learn how *to live than* how *to* earn *a living.*

That sounds like quite a challenge. Can you put some handles on how your office proposes to do this?

My handles are not yet clear. I do encourage my fellow commissioners to keep these issues in mind when they plan ahead in the Headstart, adoption, foster-care and child-welfare programs.

Partly I see this tied to a greater commitment to volunteer work, especially from Christians. Churches can model day-care programs which give children from broken homes the necessary exposure to both adult males and females. And they see to it that children and their parents get proper exposure to Jesus Christ. I'm not suggesting forced Christianity but a proper spiritual diet which is essential to all people. Let's work toward all family groups becoming self-sustaining.

Some churches have excellent preventive programs — like Marriage Encounter and the James Dobson films/tapes — which most government bureaucrats had never heard of before. These are now being looked at seriously.

I hope more and more people will volunteer to promote "family" among those who are hurting. Let's not wait for government social aids.

It's said you put considerable time into Capitol Hill prayer groups. How does this work relate to your job?

Before coming to my job, I worked four years in Washington as a Campus Crusade for Christ worker among the politicians. That's how the prayer groups got started. Many politicians are lonely and without purpose. Some have found new life in Jesus Christ and meet regularly for Bible study and prayer.

I'm still involved with one group of 15-20 senators — all Republicans — who meet weekly from 5 to 6 p.m. They have become like a covenant spiritual group.

In the past my groups were usually of a political mixture.

As political leaders change, they become excited to affirm our work for families. There is after all only one thing you can take to heaven with you — your children.

Jerry, how do you interpret the outcome of the Nov. 2 elections?

I believe the American people still endorse the Reagan mandate. The Republican losses can be attributed mostly to redistribution and an off-year election (and I see our losses as less than normal in the off year). It does not appear to me that there was any significant retreat from our support.

You were raised in a Mennonite family in a Mennonite community. What would you say to the Mennonite churches today?

I'm not now affiliated with any Mennonite church. But I credit my roots to the deep family commitment among Mennonites. That is a precious heritage I wish Mennonites would share much more freely.

I have become distressed at many Mennonite leaders who have joined the trend to support social programs by government rather than encouraging private initiative. I would like to see more emphasis on a strong spiritual base (transformed lives through personal relationships to Jesus Christ) from which Mennonites would share their strong family ties with other groups — churches and otherwise.

Mennonites are still leaders in promoting strong families, but I believe they could be much more so.

Jerry, what is your personal message to Christian Business Men in Winnipeg and to anyone reading this?

In my life I came to a crossroads where I needed to choose a purpose for life. That was found in Jesus Christ and he has sustained me and my family to a life with joy and meaning.

I have seen this happen to many people in Washington and elsewhere. Life without Christ becomes a dead end. With Christ there is hope in all circumstances. I pray and wish that all might know this hope.

We were hosted openly and congenially

Marvin and Jeannie Zehr

Our visits to over 50 congregations in eight states and provinces were an attempt to listen to what is happening in local congregations and to hear their concerns.

We have had an opportunity to share these concerns and impressions with the General Board of the General Conference and with our conference executive secretaries. They are ready to listen and to learn.

Many of the churches we visited are small, rural churches which are facing challenges of diminishing population and a weak farm economy. They are struggling with questions about their future. Young people are leaving the community and church. How long will they be able to support a full- or even part-time pastor? With fewer children, will they be able to maintain an adequate Sunday school?

Some shared the concern that there is too much emphasis in our conference on social issues rather than a greater emphasis on the Bible, evangelism and Christian growth. They recognize the need to deal with social issues, but they perceive that our conference has become unbalanced in giving greater emphasis to such issues.

A number of people expressed a sense of fear concerning the role and interpretation of the Scriptures in the personal life, the congregation and in dealing with issues. They feel that the Bible is not given a visible place of prominence that it has had in our history or in our statements of faith. It was, however, often acknowledged that many of these differences are in the area of interpretation rather than the role of the Scripture in our life and missions.

There was among the churches we visited strong support for missions and financial support for people serving in mission fields. Many of these churches are giving substantially to the Commission on Overseas Mission. Others are giving support to missionaries who have gone out under independent missions.

Personal relationships and contacts with missionaries seem to be very important. Churches want missionaries to visit them. This is encouraging but places a heavy burden on our COM staff and missionaries. However, these personal contacts in our churches are vital for the General Conference.

We discovered important differences within our conference on what it means to be Anabaptist/Mennonite. Some churches who do not use our conference publications or relate closely to conference institutions feel strongly that they are Mennonite and want to maintain contact with our Mennonite heritage.

We were impressed with the important role of pastors within our congregations. Many devoted and gifted pastors serve in our churches. The influence of each of these pastors will long be felt in the congregations. Among these pastors are many who have been nurtured and trained outside the Mennonite churches.

Much appreciation was expressed for the orientations held in Newton for pastors and spouses who are new to our conference. These seminars have been helpful for pastors and spouses to become acquainted with conference leaders, programs and with other pastors in the conference.

The interterm at the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries was also given high marks by pastors who have attended. These programs seem to be good investments by our conference in the training, growth and nurture of our pastoral leadership.

The local Women in Mission groups and their involvement with our conference Women in Mission programs seem to be an important channel of communication between the conference and local congregations. Women's groups are active in the local congregations and desire to become more informed about conference issues and programs. Jeannie had the opportunity to share with a number of such groups.

We felt a strong sense of unity between U.S. and Canadian churches. Though we have had intense dialogue in recent years about conference structures involving our two countries, the sense of unity and common mission remains strong in our churches. While conference structures are being evaluated and adapted to our current needs, we must maintain the unity which has been ours as congregations across the national boundaries.

We are grateful for the openness we felt from congregations and pastors we visited. Their willingness to share their ideas and concerns with us has been gratifying and rewarding. Our lives have been enriched, and we hope we can adequately work on the concerns we heard. *Second in a series of articles on the Zehrs' visits to GC churches*

Marvin and Jeannie Zehr traveled with an experimental mobile home and a rented car to visit over 50 GC churches as part of their pastoral sabbatical.

"Stop the development and deployment of the MX Missile," declared the members of the governing body of the Consultation of Cooperating Churches in Kansas to President Reagan and Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger. Considering the issues of peace at its annual meeting, held in Council Grove, Kan., the ecumenical group, which includes the Western District of the General Conference Mennonite Church, further urged the president and secretary of defense to "join with church leaders, senators, representatives and international leaders of goodwill both here in the United States and throughout the world in providing high moral leadership and positive alternatives of peaceful resolution to all existing disputes and tensions." The statement was issued primarily as a pastoral message to members of the churches of the member denominations to "reaffirm our calling . . . to be active peacemakers both at home and throughout the world" and "to work actively and witness for justice and reconciliation among all peoples of the world."

NEWS

Relief and development to continue in Ethiopia

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia (MCC) — On Dec. 4 Mennonite Central Committee country representative Herb Kraybill of Elizabethtown, Pa., reported that a contract was signed between the Mennonite Mission in Ethiopia and the government. The Mennonite Mission in Ethiopia will be the legal representative and entity within the country for Mennonite Central Committee and Eastern Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities, Salunga, Pa. The contract specifies that Mennonite Mission will be responsible to "promote and encourage relief and development activities in Ethiopia" and is in effect for three years.

In January 1982 the Meserete Kristos Church, an Ethiopian Mennonite Church, was closed by the government, six church leaders were detained and church bank accounts were frozen (see Dec. 21, 1982, issue, p. 610). A 1978 agreement between the church and the government under which MCC and EMBMC had functioned was, as a result, no longer valid.

MCC and EMBMC workers stayed in Ethiopia in various assignments, some at the invitation of the government. The Bale health program with one EMBMC and three MCC health workers continued to function. Two MCC teachers, who were working in a church school at the time, are now teaching in a government secondary school in Nazareth, Ethiopia. There are also two EMBMC teachers.

Regarding MCC's commitment to stay in Ethiopia, Tim Lind, co-secretary for Africa, commented, "A presence in Ethiopia is a key to understanding what is happening in eastern Africa."

MCC worker Linda Wiens examines a child in the Bale Health Center. MCC work at the health center has continued in spite of a lack of official recognition by the Ethiopian government.

Ethiopian church still closed

Newton, Kan. — The three-year contract signed last December by Mennonite Mission in Ethiopia and that country's government, allowing the mission to carry on relief and development work there, does not alter the status of the Meserete Kristos Church, says Hershey Leaman, secretary of Eastern Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities.

"The situation of those church leaders who have been detained has not changed, and the church is still closed," Leaman says. "There are, however, new steps being taken locally which do look a bit more hopeful."

In a Jan. 5 telephone interview, Leaman reasserted the Eastern Board's commitment to the Ethiopian church not to engage in mass publicity campaigns on behalf of MKC, and to release further details only as the church there would allow.

Mennonite Collegiate Institute, Gretna, Man., will host three fund-raising banquets this spring featuring CBC's "Man Alive" host Roy Bonisteel as guest speaker. Bonisteel's topic, "Welcome to Ground Zero," will focus on the dreadful possibilities of nuclear holocaust. The banquets will be held at 7 p.m. nightly March 17-19. Reservations and information are available from MCI, Box 250, Gretna, MB R0G 0V0; phone 204/327-5891. Cost is $50.

Bonnisteel

Update on two items in the Jan. 4 issue of *The Mennonite*: Sergei Batovrin, the leader of an independent peace group in the Soviet Union (see p. 16), has been released from a Moscow psychiatric hospital. And the South Korean government, bowing to an international outcry, canceled its order for shock batons (see p. 17).

CIM reaffirms China exchange, discusses Central America

Chicago (Meetinghouse) — Thirty-one people representing 15 mission boards, agencies and organizations met in Chicago Nov. 29-30 for the semiannual meeting of the Council of International Ministries. They received an update on the newly formed China Educational Exchange and were briefed on the effects of revolution on the Central American church.

In addition, three task forces briefed the council on their work, plans were approved for coping with potential jumbo medical expenses and a slide presentation and report was given on the recent Asia Reconciliation Work Camp. Member agencies also reported on new programs and other significant development in ministries.

Wilbert Shenk, CIM secretary, reported on the China Educational Exchange, a new agency growing out of the council's Asia Task Force and building upon contacts in China developed by Goshen (Ind.) College. Bert Lobe, Asia secretary for MCC, has been released to serve CEE on a one-third-time basis. With a projected budget for 1983 of $90,000, the new agency plans to send approximately 17 people to China next year, with a slightly smaller number of Chinese expected to come to North America under CEE auspices.

Dan Zehr shared with CIM his assessment of the effect which revolution is having on the church in Central America. Having completed a three-year assignment with MCC in Bolivia, Dan and his wife, Elaine, spent September contacting most of the Mennonite and Brethren in Christ groups in Costa Rica, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala and Belize. During October and November, they traveled in Canada and the United States, sharing with congregations, schools and government officials.

In some Central American countries, Zehr said, the Mennonite community is largely outside the mainstream of political events but is becoming more aware of political problems, especially the needs of refugees. In other instances, such as in Nicaragua and Guatemala, the revolution is having a much more direct impact on the life of the church.

In Nicaragua, he noted by way of illustration, everyone is expected to share in the work of local, unarmed "vigilance" committees. One Mennonite group has not felt free to participate in this, although they have expressed the desire to take another look at the question. Two other conferences have decided that they can cooperate to this extent. However, in Guatemala, such "vigilance" groups are allowed by the government to carry weapons, and many do. The Mennonite church there faces the dilemma of being suspected as guerrilla sympathizers if it refuses to participate in community defense, yet it feels it cannot be a part of these armed groups.

Suggesting that in terms of ideology, neither democracy nor communism is fully operative in Central America at present, Zehr characterized the struggle as people "wanting to have a fair shake in the life of their country." He stressed the need for North Americans to identify with the suffering and the poor, noting that "in Washington, I didn't feel much of this identification. All we heard was talk in terms of political concern. In Ottawa, the people we talked with were questioning and somewhat open."

As a result of his conversations with church leaders and refugees in the area, Zehr spoke of his coming to believe more deeply in prayer for the people of Central America. "They plead for us to remember them in prayer," he said.

On Monday evening, Verney Unruh, missionary to Taiwan, reported on the 1982 Asia Reconciliation Work Camp held in Hong Kong Aug. 1-13.

The three task forces which met half a day preceding CIM sessions gave a brief update on their work. Nearly all of the member agencies noted that contributions are running behind budget, with executives speaking of curtailing programs in order to reduce expenditures. Only the Evangelical Mennonite Church (Canada) and the Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission (AIMM) representatives reported significant increases in income during 1982.

James Bertsche, AIMM executive secretary, was elected to chair CIM for the next two years, succeeding Hershey Leaman. Wilbert Shenk of Mennonite Board of Missions was appointed to a third three-year term as secretary/treasurer. A 1983 budget of $37,335 was approved, while the next meeting was set for May 23-24 in Elkhart, Ind. *Glen A. Pierce*

Camp director needed

Job: managing director, Camp Assiniboia, Headingley, Man.

Summary job description: responsible for the organization and administration of the day-to-day operations of the camp.

Preferred qualifications: minimum of two years experience in administrative or leadership position and knowledge of church camping and retreating.

Position to start around April 18, 1983.

Forward resumes to:
"Camps with Meaning"
c/o Terry Burkhalter
202-1483 Pembina Highway
Winnipeg, MB R3T 2C9
Phone 204/475-3550.

Deadline for resumes: Jan. 26, 1983.

Nassau, Bahamas — A crowd of 25,000 Bahamians packed into Nassau's 15,000-seat T. A. Robinson Sports Stadium Nov. 24 for a one-day Billy Graham rally. It was the largest religious gathering ever held in the islands.

Goshen Biblical Seminary president Marlin E. Miller addressed the directors and representatives of boards responsible for Mennonite conference-based seminary education in Pennsylvania, Ontario and Kansas. Representatives from Illinois and Indiana-Michigan conferences of the Mennonite Church also participated in the Nov. 22-24 meeting at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Ind. AMBS and Eastern Mennonite Seminary, Harrisonburg, Va., have been cooperating with regional groups for conference-based seminary education since 1980.

Elva Krehbiel Leisy, 91, daughter of H. P. Krehbiel, founder of the Herald Publishing Company, died Dec. 25 in Dallas, where she had lived since 1938. She was the oldest surviving descendant of Christian Krehbiel, early Kansas Mennonite pioneer. She donated the building which houses the General Conference Mennonite Church offices in Newton, Kan., and a few years ago established the E. E. Leisy endowed chair in the English department at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., in honor of her husband.

Canadian delegation reports church doors 'wide open' in China

Winnipeg (MCC Canada) — "The church in China is rapidly re-establishing itself as a visible institution. It is determined to be totally 'Chinese,' independent." So says a report written by members of the Mennonite Central Committee (Canada) delegation that visited China from Oct. 18 - Nov. 8, 1982. The report was part of the MCC (Canada) executive committee meetings held here Dec. 10-11, 1982.

Plans for the trip began because a specific request to give China serious programming consideration was made by board member Stephen Lee at the MCC (Canada) annual meeting in January 1982. In February, MCC (Canada) received an invitation to visit the People's Hospital in Swatow, China, in order to discuss the medical situation there. In March the executive committee agreed to send a delegation of up to three people to China in response to the hospital's invitation. Stephen Lee, MCC (Canada) board member and pastor in Vancouver, Paul F. Peters, treasurer of MCC (Canada), and John Wieler, overseas service coordinator for MCC (Canada), were delegated to visit China.

During the trip, contact was made with the Swatow Provincial Hospital and other universities, medical colleges and clinics. It was found that modernization and "catching up" are the current agenda at these institutions. The delegation reported many positive changes in China, including an openness for educational exchange programs.

Contacts were also made with individual Christians, churches and church institutions. The delegates report that church bells greeted them in Canton, the doors were wide open and there seemed to be no concern regarding church activities. Churches in China are being reopened, buildings destroyed during the Cultural Revolution are being rebuilt and there is a good bit of confidence in the future of the church and in the future of China as well.

Lee, Peters and Wieler attended this church service in Canton on Oct. 24.

As a result of this fact-finding visit, the delegation suggested a number of components that could form the basis of outreach by MCC (Canada); namely, that there be continued support of MCC efforts in China via the China Educational Exchange (CEE) and that MCC (Canada) be ready to consider the development of a program in China which could include the placement of English teachers; assisting Chinese coming to Canadian institutions for upgrading, development of a hosting program to assist constituency in relating to Chinese visitors; the formation of a China interest group to help guide the program and that MCC (Canada) continue to participate in the Canada-China Program.

The trip also included a visit to the Kai Tak Refugee Camp in Hong Kong and a stopover in Bangkok, Thailand. Contact was made with Canadian Embassy immigration staff, United Nations officials and Jake and Louise Buhler, MCC workers there. A visit to the Phanat Nikhom Refugee Camp suggested that a number of refugees are being ignored whose cases need to receive the attention of compassionate people.
Robb Nickel

Director of food services

Position begins **June 1, 1983.** Includes head cook responsibilities and requires nutrition/menu planning, management and supervisory skills.

Call or write:
Rocky Mountain Mennonite Camp
Box 6
Divide, CO 80814
303/687-3520.

THE MENNONITE

WM EDITION

window to mission

FEBRUARY-MARCH 1983

THE OPEN WINDOW

MANY SUNDAY SCHOOL CHILDREN across our nations have sung Ruth Harms Calkin's song "Do you know, O Christian, you're a sermon in shoes?" The verses go on to remind us that since we are "sermons in shoes" we need to walk, talk, live, give, teach, preach, know, and show it in our lives.

Annie Johnson Flint's poem "The World's Bible" also reminds us that we are the hands, feet, tongues, and help which Christ has to minister and witness to our world.

Both pieces have been reminders in my own personal life because they are the kind of songs and poems that "stick," say it like it is, and somehow keep saying it over and over through the years from one generation to another.

But, how can I be a "sermon in shoes"? How can I be the world's Bible if I don't keep in tune with what God wants conveyed through me? I can assume I know because I've always gone to Sunday school and been an active church worker, but an awful lot of "Jeannie's version" gets translated into my witness.

Hopefully this issue of *Window to Mission* will challenge you, as it has me, to get more in tune with God through daily prayer and Bible study.

COVER

The Bible provides guidance and meaning for our lives as Christians. As you think back over the past years, which one verse has been especially helpful or meaningful? How? Why?

WM

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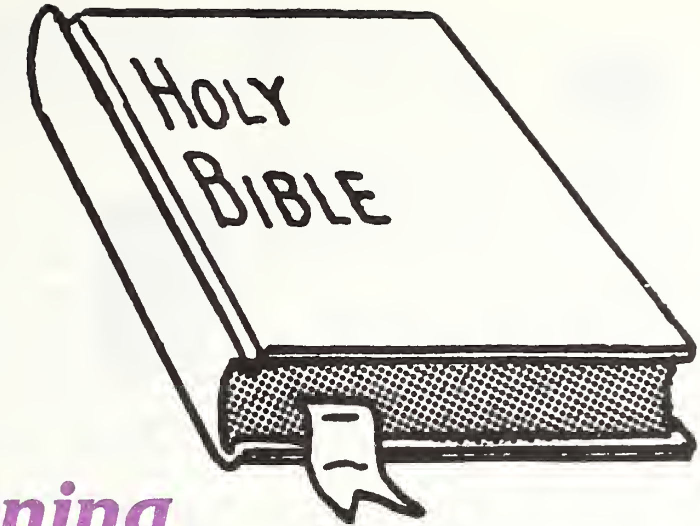


Meaning for Life

— Anna Juhnke

"For you shall go out in joy, and be led forth in peace; the mountains and the hills before you shall break forth into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands." Isaiah 55:12 (RSV)

While living in Botswana, I rejoiced that Isaiah, who lived in a similar desert country, showed me the "double vision" of faith. After the first rains, the drab, barren land burst into singing with flowers. I experienced some of the same transformation in my own life.

Isaiah's vision and those transformations give me hope for each morning — that I will be led forth in peace, and the sleepy faces in my freshman writing classes will break forth into singing!

With "double vision" I also look for signs that Christ is transforming our polluted, war-making world into his joyful kingdom, where even the trees will clap their hands.

— Evelyn Krehbiel

Consider the ravens: they neither sow nor reap. . . . yet God feeds them. Of how much more value are you than the birds!" Luke 12:24 (RSV)

Often, especially in financially precarious graduate student years, our family has leaned on the assurance of God's care.

During the five years of my husband's graduate studies, when a fourth child joined the family, we often wondered whether jobs and loans would be available as needed. Our needs were provided for.

We returned to school for further study during our recent sabbatical year (again on loans and limited income), and were able to live in the unfurnished student apartment we could afford, through contributions of our old friends' unneeded furniture.

After making a 2,200-mile trip for our son's graduation that spring, we received in the mail a check from a friend. This gift reinforced our faith with yet another reminder that God is always watching out for us.

— Carol Sawatsky

"Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus." 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 (NIV)

In various ways God is showing me how important it is for me to be thankful for *everything* that happens to me.

One way is through the Bible where I keep finding verses that ask us to praise God and be filled with gratitude.

This past year several books have emphasized the effect of praise in our lives. Sometimes praising is difficult, but as I accept God's way and give thanks, my attitude is changed and I experience peace and joy.

God allows me to experience disappointments, frustrations, and failure so that I can realize that my joy is not in earthly things.

My joy is in my relationship with God, and nothing can separate me from his love. When I trust God, I know that he will lead me in the way that is best for me.

— Janis Schmidt

"This is love for God: to obey his commands." 1 John 5:3a (NIV)

I was asking the question, How do I know I love God? I haven't seen God with my eyes or touched God or given God a big hug.

After reading this verse, I committed myself to obey any of God's commands as I come to them in my Bible.

One of the first was to be "hospitable." "But Lord, you know how expensive that can be with the food prices going up every time I walk through the doors," I argued.

"But I shall supply all your needs according to my riches if you share yours," God answered.

"As you say, Lord."

The very following Sunday I had prepared dinner for eight but fifteen came, hearty eaters too! Would there be enough?

I reminded the Lord about his promise. I really believe he multiplied the food just as he did the loaves and fish. There was plenty, and even some left over!

— Dolora Koehn

"Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass." Psalm 37:5 (KJV)

I have often wished that the Lord would send a weekly letter outlining his way for my life. Instead, God wants me to exercise the principle as found in Psalm 37:5 for both the major and minor situations in life.

In seeking the Lord's will during a pastoral change some years ago, it was our desire to locate in the West Coast area to be near family. A year passed without any contacts. When we became willing to entrust our location to God, the door in South Dakota was immediately opened.

This past summer I committed to the Lord our need for apples to put up for the family. Soon a church family offered all we could use. Psalm 37:5 really works!

—Marie Nussbaum

"Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness." Isaiah 41:10 (KJV)

This verse has been especially meaningful to me since I memorized it about eight years ago.

The first time I shared it with someone was in the home of one whose brother had just died of a heart attack. I know the verse strengthened him, and it also spoke to me.

God has given strength and help to others and to me as I have shared this verse with them in difficult times. God keeps his promises of strength at the moment we need it. God is upholding me. Thank you, Lord!

CONSIDER READING

Irregular People (Word, 1982) by Joyce Landorf provides new insights into viewing problem relationships. An irregular person is someone in your life, usually a close relative, with whom building a positive, nondestructive relationship is virtually impossible.

Landorf acknowledges that there are no simple solutions, then offers suggestions for coping in a loving way. The book offers hope and wholeness.

Though the eight chapters do not contain discussion questions, the personal accounts of the author and others describing their own "irregular persons" could easily lend themselves to topics for group consideration. The style of writing is conversational and readable.

For a biblical study of forgiveness, we recommend *Caring Enough to Forgive/to Not Forgive* (Regal Books, 1981) by David Augsburger.

Augsburger describes true forgiveness as the rebuilding of the relationship, broken by a hurt, until a level of trust is again reached. In contrast, false forgiveness results in the erring person's being forever indebted to the wounded person's benevolence. In such cases the persons involved have not dealt with the hurt or with their feelings and thus cannot experience healing in their relationship.

Concluding each of the ten chapters is "Exploring the Biblical Basis," then some questions for individual reflection, and finally small group exercises in building positive relationships. For persons interested in relationships, this book is a valuable study.

In *The Mustard Seed Conspiracy* (Word, 1981) Tom Sine analyzes worldwide trends he sees in all of life in the 1980s. As a Christian convinced of God's ongoing power, Sine writes, "God has chosen to change the world through the lowly, the unassuming, and the imperceptible."

With Mark 4:30-32 as his basic premise, he shares true stories of God's working through ordinary people committed to Jesus' teachings, to alleviate suffering and improve conditions around them. He invites his readers to join the conspiracy!

Each of the ten chapters concludes with several questions "for discussion and action." The book is challenging, not altogether comfortable, but exciting and inspiring.

For persons interested in a fill-in-the-blanks Bible study, one possibility is *A Women's Workshop on Romans* (Zondervan, 1981) by Carolyn Nystrom. Questions in the sixteen lessons range from factual to thought provoking to introspective in the light of Paul's message. There are ideas for prayer, Scripture to remember, and related hymns. A leader's manual is available.

— Janet & Larry Dixon

THE co CONNECTION

Our guest writer for this column is Mary Kauffman, missionary in Taipei, Taiwan.

What is communication? How vital is understanding to fellowship?

Eight women — four nationals (pastors' wives) and four North American missionaries — met regularly in Taipei, Taiwan, for fellowship and Bible study. During the year we studied the Book of Ruth. Kim Friesen, a counselor by profession introduced us to some of the principles of listening in order to help people.

Several barriers might have been a hindrance to communication. The first was language. All the national women speak Chinese, the official language, and Taiwanese, the local dialect. Two of them also have conversational English, one understands a little English, and the fourth knows no English.

The missionary women have varying language abilities. Marietta Sawatzky speaks Taiwanese well but only a little Chinese. Kim Friesen is fluent in Chinese but knows little Taiwanese. Marge Thompson and I were both in the early learning stages of Chinese. So no matter what language was spoken, someone had to make a translation.

In addition to the language there were other potential barriers. Ages among the group spanned from the late twenties to the early fifties. Time spent in Taiwan varied from a lifetime to less than a year.

In spite of the barriers, we had three things in common. We were all wives, mothers, and Christians. That was enough. We shared problems, joys, and concerns.

Our problems were not unlike problems of women everywhere. We faced health problems, children who resented the restraints of living in a Christian home, an unplanned pregnancy, and the death of parents. We shared the crisis of returning to the classroom and the pressures of coordinating family responsibilities with study. We were bonded by the special problems of being the wives of full-time church workers and the related expectations of being able to handle any amount of responsibility and the need for our children to always conform to the image expected of them.

We laughed and cried and prayed together. We truly supported each other and grew together.

Communication, I have learned, isn't just understanding the words that are spoken. Put your hand in the hand of a sister in Christ and hear her pray for you. The fact that she uses words unknown to you when she speaks with your Lord becomes very insignificant.

Reaching out in Christian love and sharing our faith is true Christian communion.

PROGRAM 4

TOGETHER WE SUFFER; TOGETHER, REJOICE

Helen Friesen

"If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together."
1 Corinthians 12:26 (RSV)

"Boy, was she ever lucky!"

Can we detect envy within ourselves when we hear something nice has happened to a fellow church member? How easy is it for you to share in the blessings of another?

Aren't you excited when something good comes your way? With the psalmist you say, "The lines have fallen for me in pleasant places" (Ps. 16:6 RSV).

Remember how you longed to tell someone about the marvelous things that had happened to you? Sharing it seemed to double your pleasure.

At times perhaps we fail to share our good news simply because we fear that people will think we are bragging.

What happens when what you wish for yourself happens to another? Can you honestly rejoice with them?

If you and your neighbor both enter afghans in a local contest and she receives the prize which you had hoped to win, you may find it difficult to rejoice with her.

We are happy for those who have just been married, for those who bring home their first baby, but maybe we have more difficulty when their good news is a new job, a raise in pay, a new car or house, or an honor bestowed for meritorious service.

If I can put myself in the shoes of the other person, I'll know how much I would appreciate a phone call, note, or someone stopping me on the street to congratulate me. We can rejoice with them in happiness.

Together we suffer

Suffering or painful experiences come to us all. Pain may result when there is a death in the family, a child runs away, or illness strikes.

There is mental anguish over losing a job, or the stress of natural disasters like fire, flood, hail, or tornado.

We may find it easier to help in times of natural disaster than when someone has an emotional upheaval such as a suicide in the family, a child has broken the law, someone is suffering from mental illness, or your friend discovers her husband is being unfaithful to her.

Sympathy is two hearts tugging at the same load.
— C. H. Parkhurst

Our natural reaction to those in trouble may be to stay away. We feel our words are inadequate to help.

In *The Passionate People* Keith Miller shares about the time of his father's death in 1950. Many people came to express sympathy to him and his mother, and to offer help, which was greatly appreciated.

That same evening everyone but one man finally left. This man, whom Keith had not known, had sat in the living room all evening without saying anything, as far as Keith could recall.

When everyone else had left, he stood, and simply said to Keith, "Son, I knew your daddy and he was a fine man." He looked Keith in the eyes, shook hands, and turned around and left.

Somehow that man and his caring, yet quiet presence made a lasting impression on Keith so that even now, thirty years later, he recalls him with warmth.

His sitting all evening and feeling the Millers' grief with them, and his quiet expression of having known and respected Keith's father, spoke so strongly to Keith that it has affected his own response to other people's loss of loved ones.

Because of this experience Keith tries to go to funerals, even though it may mean traveling a long distance. It means caring by just being there.

Learning empathy toward another in her good fortune, or feeling sorrow when things go wrong, comes from the love we share in Christ.

We need to see one another as part of the larger "family of God." We then can feel with one another, suffer and rejoice as we would with our own children, our brothers, sisters, and parents.

Seeing another with a heavy burden reminds us of the admonition in Galatians 6:2 that we should help each other share the burdens that come. Romans 15:1 also tells us that if we are stronger, then we need to bear with the failing of the weaker.

Jesus shared in the anguish of Mary and Martha before raising their brother, Lazarus, from the dead. He attended the joyful wedding feast at Cana, and even gave vital help when it was needed.

Real education should educate us out of self into something far finer — into a selflessness which links us with all humanity.
— Lady Nancy Aster, the first woman to sit in the British House of Commons.

From Hebrews 4:15 we learn that Christ sympathizes with our weaknesses. From him we will find the grace we need. Should we not follow the example Christ set in dealing with the hurts of others?

Parts of the whole

The Women in Mission program theme for 1982-83 focuses on 1 Corinthians 12:26 which is quoted at the beginning of this article. If you read the verses surrounding this theme verse you will discover that it is the familiar passage about the body being made up of many parts, and the Christian body, the church fellowship being made up of persons with many varying gifts.

Some years ago the *Reader's Digest* carried a series of articles dealing with some of the lesser known parts of the body, such as "I Am Joe's Thyroid."

The human body has many parts which are unseen but which play a vital role in the welfare of the whole body.

Although people have differing gifts according to Romans 12:6-8, all gifts come from the same gracious Source. We have been baptized with the same Spirit.

God often uses the seemingly unimportant (in the eyes of the world) to bring about marvelous changes. A small boy with a simple lunch of loaves and fish provided Jesus with the means to feed over 5,000 people.

In *The Small Woman* the author, Alan Burgess, relates the story of a parlor maid from London who went to China. In her homeland she had gained little respect in high places, yet in China her small gifts proved to be useful beyond imagination.

This seemingly unimportant woman led a band of children to safety on an epic journey across hostile territory.

She felt the tug to service even though her schoolmaster thought her gifts quite inferior. She was willing to "feel" with the needs of others, the children, and be open to God's leading.

A piece played on the piano by using only one note would have little appeal. A body would have little ability if it only had feet! Likewise, the body of Christ needs every Christian to take his or her rightful place in the orchestra of life. Our mission, large or small, fills a vital role.

Today much stress is placed on becoming independent. Nevertheless, no person is an island unto herself. We all need what others can contribute.

Maybe for you the assignment is to say the perfect word to someone enduring difficult suffering. Maybe you have gone through the same sort of trial and can put yourself in her shoes better than anyone else.

We should not esteem ourselves more highly than we ought. We can't boast if we are a five-talented person, nor mourn if we feel we are only a one-talent person. We ought not to view one talent as more important than another. One who despises or thinks negatively about another within the body of Christ will do so to her own, and the whole body's detriment.

It is in loving, not in being loved, the heart is blessed; it is in giving, not in seeking gifts, we find our quest. Whatever be your longing or your need, that give; so shall your soul be fed, and you indeed shall live.

God expects us to be faithful and will reward accordingly. Even weaker members of the body are indispensable. Just like bodily organs, we are to cooperate and thus produce a smoothly functioning, caring, loving body of Christ. Each gift contributes to this body.

When you have a toothache, stub your big toe, or break your little finger, you find that your body functions less efficiently. The rest of your body sympathizes and won't let you forget its trouble. We have heard of people who have lost a finger, eye, or foot through an accident. The whole body feels the shock of the loss. It is amazing to watch how our bodies begin to compensate for the loss and learn to function in new, supportive ways.

Many of us have marveled at the story and film about Bonnie Consolo who was born without arms, yet in the film we see her drive a car, select fruit in a supermarket, cut her child's hair, and can tomatoes.

When the world seems to cave in and the easy way out would be to curl up and let the world go by, the body supports, affirms the worth of its remaining parts, and works together.

Likewise, we as members of the body of Christ need to support and affirm one another when our worlds seem to be caving in and we begin to doubt our own value as part of Christ's body.

Love is . . .

When we read in 1 Corinthians we notice that the beautiful chapter on love follows the portion on gifts, Christ's body, and rejoicing and suffering together.

How fitting, because love is truly the key to all that has gone before.

When the love of Christ permeates our lives as Christians, we will find ourselves moved to show this love to others.

We know from experience how happy we are for our own family members whom we love deeply when things go well for them. We also suffer through their reverses.

With them we oftimes find the words of 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 a bit easier to practice, or at least set as relational goals.

"Love is patient and kind; love is not jealous or boastful; it is not arrogant or rude. Love does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrong, but rejoices in the right. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things." (RSV)

If we translate these attitudes, and feelings about our own family into the rest of the community of believers, we can then honestly strive toward action that says, "If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together."

PROGRAM "HOW-TO" IDEAS

1. For your devotional, use the one prepared for Program 4 available to you in the 1982-83 Devotional and Resource Packet. If you don't have one, order it from the WM Office, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, for $1.

2. Invite people who have had some of the following kinds of experiences to share with small groups: a widow; a person receiving welfare; one whose aged parents need much attention; someone whose family has been touched by divorce; a farm woman whose crops were ruined by hail; and others you have in your midst.

3. Discuss how being a good listener is a part of suffering and rejoicing together. Consider how a listening attitude is the foundation for all other loving and helping.

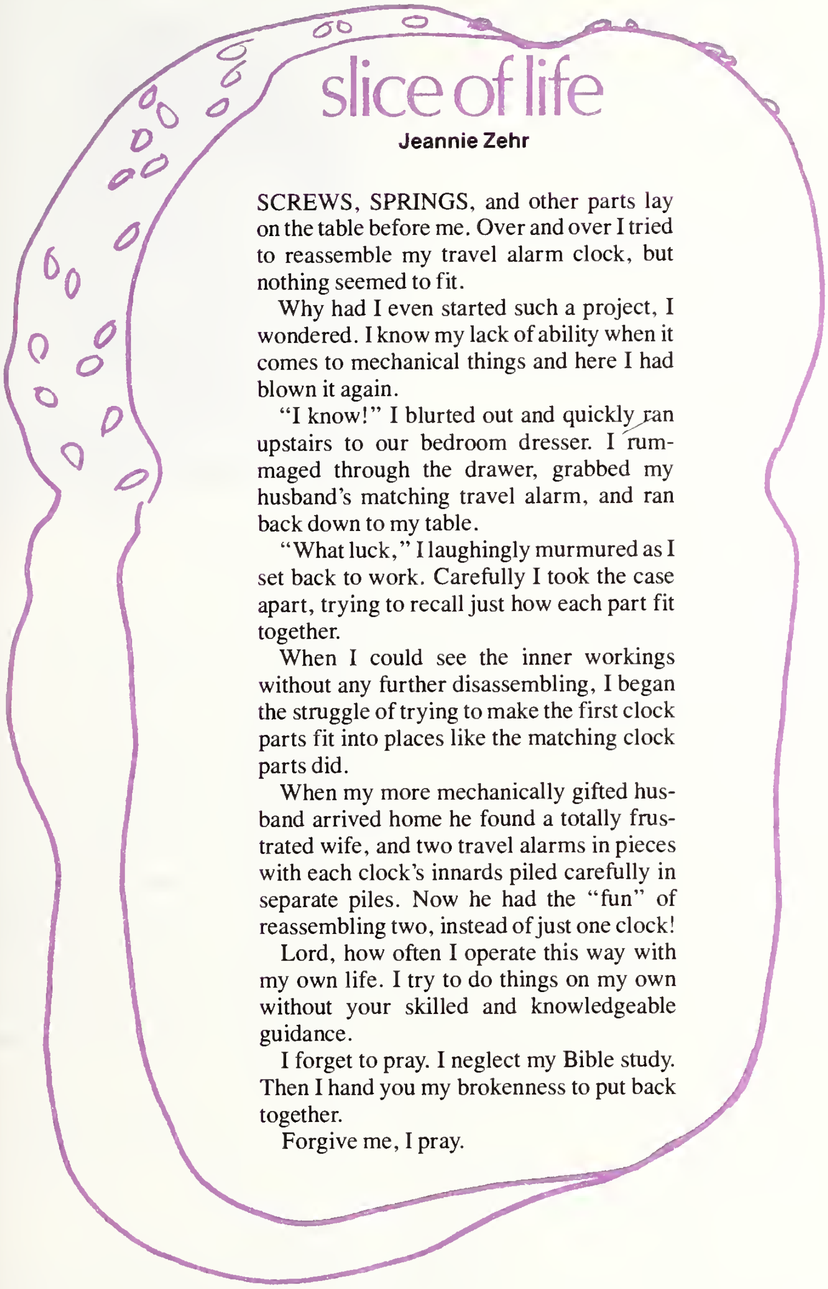
Distribute paper and pencils and ask participants in the group to do a self-survey about their listening habits.

Each should list: (a) Whom am I not listening to? (b) When do I not listen to them? (c) How can I improve?

Participants may want to answer these questions about several persons. Invite them to select one person from their list and to set a listening goal for themselves for the coming month.

Invite them to break up into twosomes, share their goal, and pray together for one another during the coming month. Encourage the twosomes to keep in contact through the month encouraging one another, and checking on one another's progress.

4. In small groups, or as individuals make a list of several persons with whom you want to rejoice. Plan to write a note, call by phone, or relate in some other way.



slice of life

Jeannie Zehr

SCREWS, SPRINGS, and other parts lay on the table before me. Over and over I tried to reassemble my travel alarm clock, but nothing seemed to fit.

Why had I even started such a project, I wondered. I know my lack of ability when it comes to mechanical things and here I had blown it again.

"I know!" I blurted out and quickly ran upstairs to our bedroom dresser. I rummaged through the drawer, grabbed my husband's matching travel alarm, and ran back down to my table.

"What luck," I laughingly murmured as I set back to work. Carefully I took the case apart, trying to recall just how each part fit together.

When I could see the inner workings without any further disassembling, I began the struggle of trying to make the first clock parts fit into places like the matching clock parts did.

When my more mechanically gifted husband arrived home he found a totally frustrated wife, and two travel alarms in pieces with each clock's innards piled carefully in separate piles. Now he had the "fun" of reassembling two, instead of just one clock!

Lord, how often I operate this way with my own life. I try to do things on my own without your skilled and knowledgeable guidance.

I forget to pray. I neglect my Bible study. Then I hand you my brokenness to put back together.

Forgive me, I pray.

Twentieth in a Series

A WOMAN IN MISSION:

Judy Epp

Ingrid Janzen Lamp

ASK ABOUT Swift Current Bible Institute and you'll get a big smile from Judy Epp as she bubbles forth about one of her favorite topics!

In 1976 Judy came to Swift Current, Saskatchewan, where she has been employed at the Swift Current Bible Institute which is sponsored by the Mennonites in Saskatchewan and Alberta. She worked first as a secretary, and now is librarian and teacher.

Judy says she had wanted to teach for a long time, but was discouraged from doing so because of a speech impediment. However, because of her efforts, this obstacle was turned into a steppingstone.

One of the things she did while working on her problem was speaking long passages from the Bible onto tape. She did that for about half a year, in addition to other exercises.

Judy enjoys teaching very much. First semester she taught a course in the Gospel of John, and currently is teaching ethics.

Judy was born in Waldheim, the eldest child of Rev. and Mrs. Elwin Epp. She has two sisters and three brothers.

After high school she attended Canadian Mennonite Bible College in Winnipeg, Manitoba, graduating with a Bachelor of Theology degree in 1974.

The next two years she served as assistant treasurer in the Winnipeg office of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada.

Judy is a substitute Sunday school teacher in her congregation, Emmaus Mennonite Church, Wymark, a small rural church south of Swift Current. She is also serving her third year as a deacon. This office involves giving a sermon from time to time.

A year ago Judy accompanied the SCBI choir on a trip. The choir served in song and Judy presented a meditation. Last fall and winter she visited several congregations in Saskatchewan and Alberta with a group of seven students. She spoke and the students presented a drama with a Christian message.

Judy is anticipating a sabbatical year during 1983-84. She plans to study at the University of Lethbridge in Alberta. She hopes to take Religious Studies, Philosophy, and Sociology.

When asked about her hobbies, Judy mentions photography (she is member of a photography club), horseback riding (she owns a horse and participates in horse shows) needlepoint, crocheting, cooking, and reading.

As a "preacher's kid" Judy saw her parents host many guests and she continues this hospitality in her own home. From time to time she invites Bible school students for a meal, and also has enjoyed entertaining other guests.

There never seems to be a dull moment for Judy Epp. As librarian at SCBI, she also manages the little bookstore at the school. It was there that I first met Judy, and with each succeeding trip there I got to know her better as we talked about books, the school, her work, and other things.

It Wonders Me . . .

Lillian Sprunger

"It wonders me" at times about the justification of poring over cookbooks for recipes, and spending many hours in preparation of a meal that is consumed in a matter of minutes. Of course:

— we need to sustain our bodies. Yes.
— we should make our food palatable. Yes.
— we should serve it attractively. Yes.

Two poached eggs with a slice of toast will sustain our bodies for a few hours between meals. Yes.

Two poached eggs cooked slowly in ramekins with proper seasoning will be palatable. Yes.

Two poached eggs served on a yellow plate with a sprig of parsley will be attractive. Yes.

But, will two poached eggs served to guests be sufficient to tell them that we are very happy they have come to share fellowship with us around our table?

"It wonders me" at times about the justification of calling myself a follower of Christ when I pore over his recipe book for no more than five minutes a day, and all the guidance I ask of him can also be done in just a few minutes. And yet:

— we need to sustain our souls. Yes.
— we need to make our spiritual food so palatable that others will partake and understand. Yes.
— we need to serve it so attractively that others will want to come to eat with us. Yes.

But will:

— five or six minutes a day sustain us fully? No.
— our unpalatable way of life cause others to want to partake with us? No.
— the insincerity of our actions be sufficiently attractive to draw others to our table? No.

Will guests be happy around our table of life when we serve them so meagerly?

WM office jottings from Joan

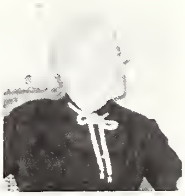
Eleanor Camp, who for fifteen years served as executive secretary of the Women's Missionary Association of the General Conference died last October 5, 1982 at Summerfield, Illinois. I asked Tina Block Ediger, Eleanor's former co-worker to share some of her remembrances of Eleanor with us.

A Tribute to Eleanor Camp

"Will you be my guest at lunch today?" asked Eleanor Camp on my first day of work in the Board of Missions office in Newton in 1955. All the other employees had gone to eat, and I did not know where to go. Eleanor's concern for me that day made a lasting impression. She cared about people.

Those of us who were privileged to work with Eleanor loved her. She was a dedicated Christian, hardworking, meticulous, articulate, intelligent, witty, charming, and loving. We sometimes referred to her as *the walking encyclopedia.* Questions related to grammar, spelling, etc., were referred to her. She always knew the answer.

Eleanor Camp and Wilhelmina Kuyf were contemporaries in the central offices of the General Conference Mennonite Church in Newton. Eleanor was the executive secretary for the Women's Missionary Association (now Women in Mission) and Wilhelmina the administrative assistant for the Board of Missions (now Commission on Overseas Mission). They enjoyed each other's company and keen minds. One day I overheard Wilhelmina say, "Eleanor, you are the cream in my coffee." Eleanor replied, "Willa, you are the sour cream in my *borscht*."



Camera shy Eleanor

Occasionally Eleanor and Wilhelmina combined their talents and edited the Board of Missions' executive secretary's reports. On one occasion they did such a masterful job that when the secretary read the report, he said, "This is terrific! Who wrote it?" Never again were his reports edited.

Eleanor loved reading and sometimes she would bury her nose in a book as she walked to work. One day she arrived at the office with a bruise on her face. Why? She had walked into a ladder.

A friend was waiting at a "Don't Walk" stoplight with Eleanor. She pondered those words and said, "Do they expect us to crawl?"

Eleanor was camera shy. When it was picture-taking time at the office, she was nowhere to be found.

Eleanor Camp loved life, people, and her work. Her family was very important to her. She was an inspiration to many, especially to those of us who were single. Eleanor set an example for being a fulfilled Christian woman. I thank God for the privilege of knowing her while she worked with the Women's Missionary Association.

to help you serve

It's not too early to begin plans for attending Bethlehem '83, the upcoming historic joint Mennonite conference to be held August 1-7 at Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. Women from the Eastern District who would like to participate in a women's choir for the conjoint women's meeting to be held on August 3, should contact the director, Romaine Sala for information. Her address is: 243 E. Main St., Leola, PA 17540. Telephone: (717) 656-9422.

contributors

Anna Juhnke (Meaning of Life) teaches English at Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas. She serves on the General Board of the General Conference and is also vice chairperson of the Mennonite Central Committee, U.S. She and her husband, James, are the parents of two children.

Evelyn Krehbiel (Meaning for Life) is a homemaker and works as editor of the Central District *Reporter*. She and her husband, Howard, have three married children. Their youngest son is in high school. She is actively involved as a member of First Mennonite Church, Bluffton, Ohio.

Carol Sawatzky (Meaning for Life) and her husband, Ernie, live in Lethbridge, Alberta. She enjoys swimming, walking, embroidering, typing, reading, and being involved in the Lethbridge Mennonite Church where her husband is the pastor.

Janis Schmidt (Meaning for Life) and her husband, Norman, are the parents of seven children. They are in their twentieth year of ministry at the East Swamp Mennonite Church, Quakertown, Pennsylvania. She loves books and has begun a business/ministry of holding Book Fellowships in homes.

Dolora Koehn (Meaning for Life) is involved in children's ministries in the Mt. Olivet Church, Huron, South Dakota. She and her husband, Melvin have three children. She is Bible study leader for the local WM group and sings in the church choir.

Marie Nussbaum (Meaning for Life) enjoys doing needlepoint, cross-stitch, and crocheting to give away as gifts. She teaches the kindergarten Sunday school class, and also a women's Bible study during the week. She and her husband, Harold, live at Mann's Choice, Pennsylvania.

Janet & Larry Dixon (Consider Studying) are the parents of two young daughters. Larry manages the Faith and Life Bookstore, Berne, Indiana, and Janet does substitute teaching. They are a lay team couple for Mennonite Marriage Encounter.

Mary Kauffman (The COM Connection) serves as guest house hostess in Taipei, Taiwan. She also teaches English and takes care of the mission library. Mary, Bob, and two sons went to Taiwan in 1980. Three of their children are in North America at this time. Kauffmans are members of the Mennonite Church in Normal, Illinois. They will be completing their assignment in the spring of 1983.

Helen Friesen (Program 4: Together We Suffer; Together, Rejoice) is an active member of the Bethel Mennonite Church, Mountain Lake, Minnesota. She is one of the organists, leads the women's choir, and also gives piano and organ lessons. She is a member of the Northern District Conference Program Committee.

Jeannie Zehr (Slice of Life) edits *Window to Mission* from her home at 4226 Maplecrest Road, Fort Wayne, Indiana.

Ingrid Janzen Lamp (A Woman in Mission: Judy Epp) edits the women's page in *Der Bote* and works as a free-lance translator (English/German). She is involved in the WM group in her congregation, Zion Mennonite Church, Swift Current, Saskatchewan.

Lillian Sprunger (It Wonders Me . . .) and her husband live in an independent living unit at the Mennonite Memorial Home, Bluffton, Ohio. She is active in the First Mennonite Church WM and enjoys doing flower arrangements and other decorations for the church chancel.

Joan Wiebe (WM Office Jottings) is WM coordinator for the General Conference. Her office is at 722 Main, Newton, Kansas.

Tina Block Ediger (A Tribute to Eleanor Camp) left her position as director of Mission Services in August 1981 after twenty-six years with the Commission on Overseas Mission. She and her husband, Elmer Ediger, live in North Newton, Kansas.

credits

Correction: Fred Loganbill served a voluntary service term with NISBCO through MCC in Washington, D.C., and not as a VS worker in Latin America, as reported on page 15 in the December-January issue.

PHOTO: Cover, Bob Taylor, Cordell, Oklahoma. Page 6, Mary Kauffman.

Larry & Janet
Dixon

Mary
Kauffman

Helen
Friesen

Ingrid J.
Lamp

Lillian
Sprunger

forecast

"There is a 'catch' to the gospel. Once told, it demands retelling. Once heard, it rings in the ears and the tune just will not fade away," says Darris K. Doyal in a recent issue of *Alive Now!* Our Christian lives are also part of Christ's ongoing, present-day gospel. In the next issue of *Window to Mission* we will think together about the importance of "sharing our stories" and how to do this for the upbuilding of Christ's kingdom here on earth.

Printed in U.S.A.

bright ideas

DO YOU DO ANYTHING special to help your congregation celebrate special days?

In some churches, families or individuals buy lily plants at Easter time to share with the church family in the worship service. The front of the sanctuary is filled with the beautiful white flowers, and the aroma meets you as you enter to worship.

Once a month during the sharing time in the Sunday morning worship service the women of the First Mennonite Church, Mountain Lake, Minnesota, have someone from their WM group report on mission work.

How do you help to inform and educate your congregation about General Conference missionaries and their work? We'd like to hear and share your ideas.

The Northern Light which is the Northern District Conference publication, features a page every month sharing what WM groups are doing. For this year our year's theme, "Together we suffer; together, rejoice," along with the program sketch found on the cover of the August-September *Window to Mission*, are being used to head the page in each issue.

The Mennonite Central Committee Peace Section has available without charge a packet of thirteen plays and readings about peacemakers in the twentieth century.

The packet, "Remembering: Stories of Peacemakers," consists mainly of plays that tell the true stories of Mennonite peacemakers from Canada and the United States in the world wars.

It is hoped that the packet will also encourage local congregations to tell their own stories of peacemaking. If interested in a packet write: MCC Peace Section, 21 South 12 Street, Akron, PA 17501.

Women of the Good Shepherd Church in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, had a special ending to a dinner together in the home of one of their members.

After the meal each woman around the table was handed a clear plastic packet of premeasured ingredients — some more, some less, and some still less, but all very necessary.

Then came the pan into which each added her ingredient. Each one stirred awhile, and then it was put into the oven. Out came a tasty cake which they all enjoyed for dessert.

What a beautiful way to experience the importance of how all gifts are needed, working together for the effective ministry of Christ.

In 1978, Rekha Roy, a speech pathologist and audiologist in Calcutta, India, began her own Speech and Hearing Institute. The project grew until at present there are 40 children who are being rehabilitated at the center. Many who come cannot pay the fees, but they are not turned away. Mennonite Central Committee over the years has supported the institute by providing diagnostic equipment and financial assistance. Twenty-five volunteers, who receive only enough money to cover their own transportation expenses, work with the children. All are trained, some to work with deaf children, some to work with mentally handicapped.

Rekha Roy

In spite of intense lobbying by the U.S. government's Agency for International Development, the lame duck Congress passed a Bread for the World-initiated measure that would shift more U.S. foreign development aid to help the world's poorest people achieve self-sufficiency. The reform will mean more U.S. foreign aid spent next year on productive facilities and services such as irrigation, rural roads, health clinics and agricultural credit for the world's poor and less U.S.-funded studies, surveys and consultants for overseas bureaucracies.

Conference planners see rising interest in 11th Assembly

Strasbourg, France (MWC) — Latest attendance estimates have mounted to 6,500 for the 11th Mennonite World Conference Assembly, July 24-29, 1984, in Strasbourg. The new figures have provided the basis for further plans in recent meetings of the assembly's organizing and program committees.

Illustrations of widespread interest in the 1984 gathering were given in support of the recent estimate increase. Dutch Mennonites have recently announced that they will organize a "Menno Train" from the Netherlands to the Strasbourg conference. No fewer than 75 tours are currently being advertised in North America, reported MWC executive secretary Paul N. Kraybill.

Questions concerning the assembly program schedule and its content topped the agenda for the Nov. 26-28, 1982, program committee meeting at Schänzli Mennonite Church in Basel, Switzerland. A week later at Thomashof, West Germany, organizing committee members laid out plans for the necessary technical arrangements and physical facilities.

The enlarged attendance estimate necessitated various changes in organizing committee plans. Additional facilities will be investigated for children's activities. More space for food services will also be necessary to accommodate the additional 1,500 participants.

In light of the recent developments, organizing committee members engaged in further discussion on cost and stewardship.

"We must design our program with the awareness that we are representing our brothers and sisters," stated MWC program committee chairman Carl F. Brüsewitz, reminding his committee of the context for their work.

Discerning the needs and expectations within the international brotherhood proved to be a key task in the program committee's selection of main speakers. Do our people want to hear top-notch professionals or more practice-oriented persons? And on the basis of what experience should we select these speakers? asked committee members during the lengthy discussion.

Conferees agreed that a wide representation among speakers and devotional leaders would enrich the program. Recommendations of the 1981 MWC General Council in Nairobi were cited, supporting the participation of women as conference speakers. Addresses by people from Third World countries, it was frequently underscored, would also serve as an invaluable contribution to the international conference.

In a similar vein, it was hoped that Third World youth will be able to come to Strasbourg in 1984. Organizers eagerly welcome their participation in a two-week work camp scheduled for July 24 - Aug. 1, 1984.

The committees reflected the upcoming assembly on a miniature scale. Coming from five different countries, their membership encompassed four language groups and five conferences within the Mennonite fellowship.

General Board proposes constitutional change

Newton, Kan. (GCMC) — The General Conference's General Board will be bringing a proposal for a change in the wording of a small portion of its constitution to delegates at the triennial sessions at Bethlehem, Pa., Aug. 1-7.

The proposed revision stems from recent discussions about the propriety of the General Board's power to define the rights and responsibilities of regional conferences. Board members feel that such power is inappropriate.

The proposed change would delete the last sentence of Article II, Section I. C. Regional Conferences: "The rights and responsibilities of such recognized conferences shall be defined by the General Board."

The new wording would simply be "C. Regional Conferences. While not an association of conferences, the General Conference shall recognize through action at the triennial conference those regional conferences that shall be considered a part of the General Conference."

The proposal will be discussed at the conference's Council of Commissions in March.

THE MIDDLE EAST

May 7-28, 1983

Egypt — Cairo, Luxor
Israel — Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Capernaum, Nazareth, Qumran, Masada

Tour hosts:
David Schroeder, New Testament professor, CMBC; Gerald Gerbrandt, Old Testament professor, CMBC

This tour will study the land of Israel both as the setting of Jesus and the Old Testament, and as a land in the midst of conflict.

For more information, contact:
John Schroeder
Assiniboine Travel Service
219-818 Portage Ave.
Winnipeg, MB R3G 0N4
Phone 204/775-0271.

The Mennonite Church of Nigeria has announced the ordination of I. U. Nsasak as the first Nigerian Mennonite bishop on Dec. 26, 1982. The MCN asks for prayers for wisdom for Nsasak.

The annual convention of the Mennonite Economic Development Associates attracted some 400 participants to Winnipeg Nov. 12-14 to discuss how their life in the business world meshes with their faith as Christians. They met under the theme "Full Value: Where Faith and Economics Meet." In a seminar on "Working at Money and Economic Issues," John Rudy and Daniel Kauffman asked participants to prioritize a list of economic issues on which Mennonite congregations need to work. They identified the top five, in order, as faithful stewardship, financial counsel, responsible lifestyles, personal money management and estate planning. One participant, Gerhard Bartel of Calgary, said that during the past 20 years people in the church have built up "walls of individualism" around themselves. "When I first came to this country," he said, "we had to help each other. . . . Now we're finding that we do need each other again." In one of two major addresses, Irving Hexham of the religion department of the University of Manitoba challenged participants to deal with dehumanizing technology, the rise of new religions in North America and the failure of leadership among Christians. In a second address, Cal Redekop of Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, Ont., listed ways that the Anabaptist/ Mennonite perspective contrasts with the ethics of the commercial world.

Just another day in the life of a Flying Mission pilot . . .

Jay Aeschliman never knows what his job as a pilot will bring from day to day. Here he loads medicines into the Flying Mission plane.

Gaborone, Botswana (MCC) — The call came across the radio on the Flying Mission 7 a.m. "sked" (quick flight) band. A mercy flight was needed for a critically ill child at the Ghanzi health center.

Jay Aeschliman, originally from Archbold, Ohio, made some quick calculations . . . he could be airborne in the single engine Cessna in two and a half hours. "Get the patient ready. I'll be there by 10:30."

Jay and Cynthia Aeschliman work for Flying Mission, a non-denominational Christian charitable organization based here. They, along with pilot/mechanic Don Horst and family, are seconded to Flying Mission by Mennonite Central Committee. Rachel Horst and Cynthia Aeschliman assist as "ground crew," receiving and sending radio messages as needed. Their work is unique in overall MCC program, since they are the only volunteer pilots working with MCC.

The call this morning had come from Ghanzi, a village of 3,000 which serves as a referral center for numerous scattered clinics and health posts. The village is in western Botswana about 350 miles from the capital city of Gaborone or two days' travel over terrible roads. It has been said that if a patient was sick enough to be referred to Ghanzi, the patient was too sick to survive the journey to Gaborone.

As Aeschliman circled overhead he saw that the ambulance, a four-wheel-drive truck, was backed up to the door of the Ghanzi center. Friends handed him a thermos of coffee after landing. A few minutes later the ambulance rolled up to the plane and health workers loaded the child onto the Cessna for the return flight. Besides the sick child and nurse, two elderly men needing cataract surgery accompanied the flight to the capital.

Before they took off the regional medical officer asked if they could make a medicine drop in the village of Xade. There were reports of an outbreak of diarrhea there caused by contaminated water.

They took off with the well-wrapped, football-sized packet of medicine and were soon flying over the Central Kalahari Desert Game Reserve. Xade is a hundred miles from Ghanzi, the nearest town, and is one of the most isolated Basarwa (Bushman) villages. After searching carefully for the village, they spotted it and got ready for a low pass over the center of the settlement. The drop was a success with the package landing inside a compound. Villagers ran out to investigate the package.

An ambulance was waiting at the airport in Gaborone to transfer the patients to the Princess Marina Hospital. The child began improving almost immediately and within a few days was ready to go home.

A much less dramatic but possibly more important aspect of the services of Flying Mission is the monthly visit of the regional medical officer to remote clinics throughout Botswana. This curative and preventative effort to take doctors to isolated areas reduces overcrowding at the main hospitals and provides better medical services to the poor in the most remote regions of Botswana.

Other services provided are the mission-related flights. Flying Mission serves a wide variety of groups, including MCC, Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission, United Free Church of Scotland, the Scripture Union, the African Evangelical Fellowship and others. The kinds of flights are even more diversified than the groups served. Aeschliman and Horst provide support services for missionaries in isolated desert and swamp regions in Botswana. They take pastors on weekend preaching trips and transport mission directors and board personnel to see remote projects or to evaluate the drought situation. Sometimes they fly people who cannot get visas to travel through South Africa to Lesotho and Swaziland for retreats or regional meetings.

Why are the Aeschlimans here? Jay answers, "We are here to go, preach and heal, as stated in the Flying Mission logo, with Christ at the center of our work and empowered by the Holy Spirit. We pray that we can be faithful to Christ's call and remain in his will."

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June 26 - July 16, 1983

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600 Shaftesbury Blvd.
Winnipeg, MB R3P 0M4
Phone 204/475-2615 or 888-6781.

The American Academy of Pediatrics has embarked on a massive public education program to inform parents, their children and the health-care community of the "pressing" and "special medical needs of our young people," says James E. Strain, academy president. He pointed out that the suicide rate for teenagers has more than tripled in the last 20 years, alcohol and drugs kill 8,000 teenage drivers a year, about 650,000 unmarried teenage girls become pregnant each year, and of the venereal diseases, gonorrhea alone occurs in 700,000 adolescents a year.

The U.S. Energy Department is substantially upgrading security at its Rocky Flats nuclear weapons plant near Denver, according to a report in the Jan. 3 issue of *Newsweek*. The mile-square facility is currently patrolled by 175 guards equipped with M-16 rifles and backed up by two armored personnel carriers. Plant officials say the new measures were prompted not by any specific threats, but by continuing concern over terrorists seeking plutonium for nuclear weapons. They insist that the tighter security is not aimed at antinuclear demonstrators, more than 48,000 of whom have marched on the plant during the past four years.

On Christmas night, after gathering with friends for prayer at the Arvada (Colo.) Mennonite Church, Robert Carlsten entered the west gate of the Rocky Flats nuclear weapons plant near Denver. He was arrested while carrying a candle to symbolize bringing the light of Christ into the dark world. A sign had been erected at the gate reading, "Unto us a bomb is born, to kill all peoples." Carlsten was released from the Denver city jail on personal recognizance bond and was to be arraigned in federal court on Jan. 3.

Ecumenical talks in Lesotho aimed at reconciliation

Maseru, Lesotho (MCC) — The churches in Lesotho are trying to bring reconciliation to their politically divided country. In a recent press release, leaders of the Anglican, Roman Catholic, Lesotho Evangelical, Methodist and Assemblies of God churches wrote, "A misfortune that we have noticed is that Basotho (citizens of Lesotho) kill other Basotho, and Christians kill other Christians. We must find a remedy for this disease."

Recently representatives of the churches took a courageous step by visiting with opposition exiles in the nearby country of Botswana. Anglican Bishop Philip Mokuku, discussing the visit with the Mennonite Central Committee country representative Robin Gibson, orginally from Toronto, said, "It is our intention that church leaders act as a bridge to bring together all sides which stand opposed to one another."

Mokuku (left) chats with Gilbert Sibolla of the Lesotho Evangelical Church and Gibson.

MVS associate director for Canada appointed

Teichroeb

Newton, Kan. — Ruth D. Teichroeb of Seattle, a native of Ontario and member of Stirling Avenue Mennonite Church in Kitchener, has been appointed to the position of Mennonite Voluntary Service associate director/Canada for a three-year term, effective Jan. 17.

Teichroeb's appointment is the culmination of several years of discussion between representatives of the General Conference's Commission on Home Ministries and the Conference of Mennonites in Canada's Congregational Resources Board about the placement of a staff person in Canada to administer MVS units there.

A 1980 honors graduate of the University of Waterloo (Ont.) with a bachelor's degree in psychology and a peace and conflict studies option, she has been employed by a number of social service agencies in Seattle and in Ontario. Most recently she has served as a mental health specialist and therapist with an acute care psychiatric unit at St. Cabrini Hospital in Seattle.

Teichroeb becomes one member of a team of four associate directors working with the MVS director, and will have particular responsibility for the development and administration of MVS units in Canada. She will work closely with CMC congregations, Mennonite college, Bible school and university students, provincial and Canadian conferences and Mennonite Central Committee (Canada) in developing a national MVS program.

After a two-week orientation in Newton, Teichroeb will work out of an office at the CMC offices at 600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, MB R3P 0M4. The CMC's Congregational Resources Board assisted CHM in the selection of Teichroeb for the position and will provide an ongoing advisory group for counsel and assistance.

THE MENNONITE STORY IN SLIDES

Seven easy-to-use slide sets, each up to 20 minutes in length, with script, on the following subjects, are now available:

1. The Bloody Theater or Martyrs Mirror
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3. Overseas Missions: General Conference Mennonite Church
4. Sixteenth Century Anabaptism
5. Indian Missions: General Conference Mennonite Church
6. Mennonite World Conference
7. Mennonites in Russia: The Old Colony. Khortitza

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Or rent for $2 an individual set from the
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Produced by the Heritage Committee, with a grant from the Schowalter Foundation, in cooperation with the Mennonite Heritage Centre

A "Friendship Evangelism" Seminar with Arthur McPhee, a radio speaker, author, pastor and evangelist from Cape Coral, Fla., will be held Feb. 26 at the Markham (Ill.) Lutheran Church, from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The seminar will provide in-depth training on the "friendship" approach to personal evangelism. Registration costs $20. Further information is available by calling Margaretha Ediger at 312/333-6541.

Shiloh Community of Dexter, Ore., is in its third year of meeting with Internal Revenue Service officials over an alleged $1.7 million in back taxes. Shiloh has agreed to another audit, which their attorneys believe will "formalize" the concessions the IRS has made to them. The community is seeking input from other communities, ministries and informed individuals as to whether or not Shiloh settling with the IRS (rather than continuing to fight it through the courts) would compromise others by setting an adverse precedent. Those interested may write Shiloh Community, 81868 Lost Valley Lane, Dexter, OR 97431, or phone 503/937-2101.

The Bluffton (Ohio) College faculty has approved a recreation management major to be implemented at the college beginning with the 1983 fall term, according to academic dean Donald L. Pannabecker. Major course offerings, in addition to the college's liberal arts requirements, will include recreation therapy, camp administration, recreation legislation, facility planning, aquatics and outdoor recreation.

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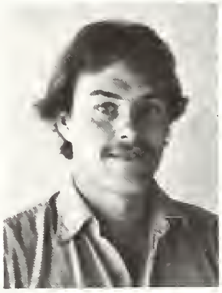
workers

Driediger

Entz

S. Ginter

Habegger


Epp

B. Ginter

Hodson

D. Krehbiel

Gayle Driediger, North Star Church, Drake, Sask., began a one-year Mennonite Voluntary Service term Aug. 24 as a child-care worker in Beatrice, Neb. A 1980 graduate of Rosthern (Sask.) Junior College, she is the daughter of Jacob and Susanna Driediger of Drake.

Lowell Entz, First Church, Newton, Kan., began a two-year MVS term as a chaplain's assistant at Kansas State Industrial Reformatory in Hutchinson, Kan., Aug. 24. A 1982 graduate of Grace College of the Bible, Omaha, Neb., he is the son of Willard and Edna Entz of Newton.

Donald Epp, Nutana Park Church, Saskatoon, began a one-year MVS term Sept. 17 as a home repair worker in Wichita, Kan. A 1982 graduate in theology from Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg, he is the son of Dick and Betty Epp of Saskatoon.

Brad and *Sharon Ginter*, First Baptist Church, Walled Lake, Mich., and Central Mennonite Church, Archbold, Ohio, respectively, began two-year MVS assignments Oct. 18 in Dallas, where they are working with Salvadoran refugees at Casa America Libre. Both have served previously in Kentucky and the Dominican Republic under other organizations. Brad is a 1970 economics graduate of the University of Michigan (Ann Arbor) and the son of Carmin and Ruth Ginter of Lincoln, Mich. Sharon graduated from Goshen (Ind.) College with a bachelor's degree in psychology and sociology in 1973 and is the daughter of Kenneth and Florence Aschliman of Archbold.

Janet Habegger, First Christian Church, Decatur, Ind., began a two-year MVS term at the Fresno (Calif.) Boys' Clubs Sept. 14. A 1978 graduate of Bluffton (Ohio) College with a bachelor's degree in recreation and camping, she is the daughter of Warren and Margerie Habegger of Berne, Ind.

Virginia Hodson began a one-year MVS term as chaplain and assistant manager at Jonquil Hotel in Chicago Sept. 1. She is formerly an administrative assistant in the division of theological and religious studies at Boston University and a former student at Manchester (Conn.) College and the BU graduate school. She taught elementary school in St. Petersburg, Fla. Her parents are George and Eleanor Green of Manchester.

Doug Krehbiel, *Jude Krehbiel* and *Emory Wedel* began a nine-month MVS term Sept. 1 as members of a music/drama troupe called "Road Less Travelled." The threesome travels to various locations, mostly within the central Kansas region, to present programs on the themes of peace and service for interested groups and organizations. Doug Krehbiel, Eden Church, Moundridge, Kan., is a 1979 graduate of Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., with a bachelor's degree in social work. His parents are Robert Krehbiel of Moundridge and Velera Litchfield of Hutchinson, Kan. Jude Krehbiel, Arvada (Colo.) Church, is a former director of teacher placement and secretary in the education department at Bethel College. Her parents are Homer and Dorothy Kerr of South English, Iowa. Emory Wedel, Eden Church, Moundridge, served under MVS in Denver 1979-80. His parents are Norman

Rep. Jim Wright, majority leader of the U.S. House of Representatives, has suggested applying the tithe to the defense budget. Speaking at a Southern Baptist peace conference, he suggested that the United States and Soviet Union each agree to reduce their arms spending by 10 percent a year for five years. The money saved would go into a fund "to benefit the needy of the world." After five years, said Wright, the fund would be taking in enough ($200 billion a year) to equip hospitals in every town in the world that has more than 10,000 people, build a quarter of a million schools or construct 10 million modern homes to replace the world's infested slums.

A tax workshop for anyone interested in war tax resistance is scheduled for Jan. 22, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., at the Community Friends Meetinghouse in Cincinnati. Topics to be discussed include history and philosophy of war tax resistance, spiritual and religious perspectives, legal questions and methods of resisting, building a support community, and how to deal with the IRS. Information is available from Tax Workshop, Community Friends Meeting, 3960 Winding Way, Cincinnati, OH 45229; phone 513/861-4353.

"Beyond Legality: the Reconciling Community" is the title of a justice ministries workshop to be held March 18-19 in Saskatoon. It is sponsored by Mennonite Central Committee (Saskatchewan) and Person T(w)o Person. Howard Zehr, MCC U.S. justice ministries consultant, will be the keynote speaker. For more information, write Orville Andres, No. 1-22- 10th St. W., Prince Albert, SK S6V 3A4.

RECORD

J. Krehbiel

Wedel

Norton

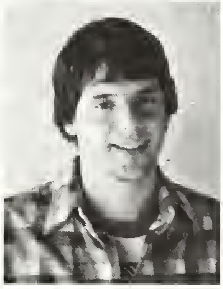
Preheim

Smith

Wolfe

Metcalf

Nichols


Radford

Sawatzky

and Nadine Wedel of Moundridge. The three coordinate their work at their various places of residence in the Newton, Kan., area.

Victoria Metcalf began a one-year MVS term at the Center on Law and Pacifism in Colorado Springs, Colo., Oct. 6. She has degrees in law from Georgetown University, Washington, and East Asian studies from Vassar College, Poughkeepsie, N.Y., has worked for the last four years as an attorney in Springfield, Ill. She is the daughter of Lawrence and Dorothy Metcalf of Blackstone, Va.

Deanna Nichols began a one-year MVS term with the Native American Urban Transition Program in Denver Sept. 5. A 1982 graduate of Westmont College, Santa Barbara, Calif., with a bachelor's degree in sociology, she is the daughter of Ted and Dorothy Nichols of Thousand Oaks, Calif.

Campbell and *Christ Nisbet* have been appointed voluntary service coordinators for the MCC (Canada) service program in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Gwen Norton, St. Stephen's United Methodist Church, Troy, Mo., began a two-year MVS term Sept. 22 at Hospitality House in Chicago. Norton, a former schoolteacher from Bowling Green, Mo., is 73.

Beth Preheim, Faith Church, Newton, Kan., began a one-year MVS term at Whitmore Neighborhood Office in Kansas City, Kan., July 5. A former student at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., she is the daughter of Vern and Marion Preheim of Newton.

Bill Radford, United Methodist Temple, Seattle, began a two-year MVS term at the Boys' Clubs of Fresno (Calif.) Sept. 19. A 1981 graduate in commerce and recreation from the University of Puget Sound, Tacoma, Wash., he is the son of Arland and Mildred Radford of Tukwila, Wash.

Janette Sawatzky, Greendale First Mennonite Church, Sardis, B.C., began a one-year MVS term Sept. 20 as secretary with Justice Information Center in Denver. A 1977 graduate of Columbia Bible Institute, Clearbrook, B.C., she is the daughter of William and Mary Sawatzky of Sardis.

Duncan Smith, United Methodist Church, Spokane, Wash., began a two-year MVS term as a social worker in Chicago Sept. 6. A 1981 graduate of the University of Washington, Seattle, with a bachelor's degree in social work, he is the son of Hazel and the late Henry Smith of Spokane.

David Speicher has been named director of alumni affairs and associate director of development at Bluffton (Ohio) College, effective Feb. 1, 1983.

Sheralyn Wolfe, Mount Royal Mennonite Church, Saskatoon, began a one-year MVS term Aug. 29 as a day-care worker in Hutchinson, Kan. Her parents are Willard and Martha Wolfe of Saskatoon.

their joy
their hurt
your laughter
your pain

MCC needs agriculturists, teachers, nurses and others dedicated to Christ's way of love, to join their lives with those in local church and community groups in many lands.

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MCC (Canada), 201-1483 Pembina Highway, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3T 2C8

LETTERS

Renewal among Mennonites

Mal Braun (Nov. 9 issue) asks, "Where are our prophets?" It's a question we have often asked. A companion question might be, "Where are our people?" It is difficult to recognize a prophet unless one is ready to hear a prophet rather than an eccentric.

Many people have made prophetic statements in our churches and church media, but nothing has happened.

I was reading again Frank Epp's *The Glory and the Shame*, in which he states the needs for the leadership in our church and the hindrance to much needed renewal.

That was written 15 years ago. Several years ago we were given a ringing challenge to renewal by our leadership at the Conference of Mennonites in Canada. Many have shown concern for our denomination and our loss of the Anabaptist vision. Still we have seen no real leadership (or following) for many years.

What will it take to move us again, to renew in us a hunger for God instead of a comfortable maintenance of the status quo?

It's often been said we need another person — another Menno. I believe we also need another crisis. No one takes medicine unless they are convinced they need it.

But where will the leaders come from? Can those who have won our respect over the years still capture the spirit and vision needed, or must it come from younger persons?

We don't need any more observers to tell us what our needs are. We need a leader or leaders who can help us deal with the real issues which we so often avoid and deal with by forming study groups and writing reports and occasionally a new theology.

To simply throw over our prosperity for the sake of renewal won't do it either. The change we need is far more basic. Poverty is not necessarily a sign of spirituality.

Moving to another country as we have done numerous times may not be the answer either. It may be that we have no place to go anymore and that we may have to find renewal in the midst of prosperity and relative peace.

But somehow we must again experience as a people a hunger for God and take new risks. One might be to restore respectability to sound preaching and to witnessing and soul winning. Perhaps in counseling the unbelieving we need again take the risk of offending people with the gospel — to proselytize.

It's quite possible the next movement of Mennonites will not be a physical one but primarily a spiritual one. It may take place in small groups among those who are not concerned about denomination and tradition and will probably at first be small and in many ways similar to the early church and early Anabaptist groups.

I realize this is only an opinion and in a way I hope I'm wrong.

The leadership around such a renewal would focus on Scripture and not on any leader, as the Anabaptists did at first. Those who really want renewal should look there rather than for a leader. Before a leader is needed, a people to be led is needed. In any event Christ is already there. *Walfried Goossen, 16 Helen St., Apt. 106, Dundas, ON L9N 1N4*

Nov. 26

The Mennonite in braille?

My husband and I are wondering if it is possible to receive *The Mennonite* in braille?

Due to my husband's inability to see, it would be of great enjoyment to him if he could read it for himself — in braille. He prefers to read for himself rather than having someone read for him. *Mrs. Clarence Koop, 3634 Diefenbaker Drive, Saskatoon, SK S7L 4X5*

Nov. 26

Dispensationalism article good

I appreciated very much the article (Nov. 23 issue) by Hans K. LaRondelle on dispensationalism. This system of thought is fundamentally un-Christian, even anti-Christian, and is responsible for many theological errors. It has had a large influence in some congregations of the General Conference with which I am familiar and it's time we recognized the dangers of this kind of anti-biblical use of the Bible.

This article was a clear, understandable exposition of a complicated theological topic. Give us more like it. *John D. Thiesen, 1873 S. Jackson, Denver, CO 80210* Dec. 6

Editor's note: John's enthusiasm was not matched by all our readers. But our hope and prayer was and is for all of us to examine our own faith commitments. I don't believe that dispensationalists are "bad"; but I do believe all of us need to examine regularly what we believe and what those beliefs mean in our Christian witness and life.

Challenge LaRondelle article

As a grateful graduate of Moody Bible Institute and pastor of a Mennonite church largely made up of dispensationalists, I was disappointed with the tone of LaRondelle's article (Nov. 23 issue). Dispensationalism and its major alternative, covenant theology, both have large followings in the church of Jesus Christ and are quite complex, containing strengths as well as weaknesses. LaRondelle is obviously opposed to dispensationalism and implies that the whole system is faulty.

This brings two questions to my mind. Do you plan to publish an article showing the weaknesses of the primary options to dispensationalism? Also, why do we Mennonites, who view ourselves as being broadminded and ecumenical, feel the need to attack dispensationalism or some other biblically based hermeneutical system?

In a recent editorial in *The Mennonite* it was suggested that we not go theological witch-hunting, especially in relation to non-essentials. It is in that spirit that I try to challenge my church to be open-minded, loving and courteous when encountering variations in doctrine which are not foundational. One-sided articles, however, such as that of LaRondelle's, do not foster that attitude. *Russell Hobbs, Hutterthal Mennonite Church, Carpenter, SD 57322*

Dec. 7

Editor's note: I agree with you. See my response to the Thiesen letter.

Minister needed

First Mennonite Church in Winnipeg is inviting inquiries for the position of associate minister to work as part of a team of three full-time ministers in a large bilingual congregation.

Direct inquiries to:
Waldemar Janzen
991 Fleet Ave.
Winnipeg, MB R3M 1K5
Phone 204/284-1061.

We cultivated Friesen family roots

LaVerna Klippenstein

Over 300 descendants of Abraham Friesen (1823-1903) and Maria Heinrichs Friesen (1831-1904) registered for a reunion at the Mennonite Collegiate Institute in Gretna, Man., July 17-18, 1982.

They came from California, Kansas, South Dakota and five Canadian provinces — 34 from British Columbia and more than 250 from Manitoba. Among them were a pharmacist, farmers, ministers, musicians, carpenters, caretakers, nurses, teachers and a lot of people in active retirement. Among them too were Fairbairns and Funks, Cmelas and Kornelsons, Paquettes and Penners, Bensons and Buhrs, Walls and Paulls.

More amazing than the diversity was the atmosphere of unity. It was experienced in the clusters of cousins and extended conversations throughout the weekend.

"I sat down," said Susie (Mrs. C. D.) Klippenstein, "and suddenly I was surrounded by 10 cousins." That in itself is a rare experience for someone past 70.

Other unique experiences were seeing elegant century-old black wedding gowns modeled by Elma Buhr Driedger and Millie Friesen Kunka, descendants of the brides. Hearing Corny Rempel play a selection from Mozart's "Magic Flute" on an ordinary carpenter's saw. Feeling welcomed and accepted by dozens of strangers and relatives. Walking among a forest of color-coded family trees.

Helen Buhr Regier from Newton, Kan., kept collecting data for the Friesen genealogy book while Elma Driedger explained her display of old dolls, dishes and dresses. "We were allowed to play with them only on Sundays," she said.

Fine weather facilitated tours to nearby cemeteries on Saturday.

Extensive preparations coordinated by Nettie Friesen Neufeld of Steinbach, Man., were evident throughout the weekend. Others on committees were John S. Friesen of Steinbach, John R. Friesen, Nettie J. Neufeld, George Wall and Frieda Bain, all of Winnipeg.

Kinship ties were felt most strongly during the singing times led by Hanna Reimer of British Columbia. She created an instant choir as we sang "My Grandfather's Clock." Later we were moved to renewed commitment as we sang, *"Mein Gott, ich bin entschieden, Auf ewig bin ich dein"* (My God, I have decided forever to be Thine).

Over 300 descendants of Abraham and Maria Friesen celebrated their family roots.

In his Sunday sermon Larry Kehler listed things we have learned from our ancestors. They were dependable. Their yes meant yes and their no meant no. They expressed their faith through action. They were a pilgrim people and a people of peace.

"I don't know why," Kathy Paull told Nettie J. Neufeld, "but I feel so drawn to you."

Kathy's comment represents the feelings of many who found insight through identity and fellowship with distant relatives who became instant friends.

Shepherd charged with a flock

Jake Nickel

Nov. 7, 1982, was an exciting day at Nutana Park Mennonite Church in Saskatoon. Even 14-16 centimeters of fresh snow could not interrupt the celebrations as the congregation met for the ordination and installation service of their new pastor, Lloyd Ratzlaff.

Led by the senior choir under the leadership of Alfred Driedger, the church rang with praise to God for the blessing and gift of a pastor.

Lloyd and Myrna, along with their two daughters, Shannon and Sheri, were welcomed to the congregation and accepted as members by Bill Bergen, chairman of the congregation. Bill also led in the service of ordination and laying on of hands. To make this a symbolic act of the entire congregation, persons representing the various age groups within the fellowship had been asked to participate. Peter Funk, pastor of the Pleasant Hill Church and representing the Conference of Mennonites of Saskatchewan, spoke the prayer of consecration.

Ben Fast led in the reading of portions which set the tone for the occasion.

Jake Nickel and Bernie Retzlaff gave the charge to the congregation and to the pastor, respectively. From 1 Peter 1 Jake challenged the congregation to take seriously the priesthood of all believers and to search for its meaning in an urban society with the help of their new spiritual leader.

Bernie charged the new pastor to be a kind shepherd. Sheep, he noted, have a tendency to go astray because they keep their nose to the ground, moving from one delectable morsel to the next till when they do look up they are separated from the flock and the shepherd. Lead them, guide them and search for them with gentleness. As a preacher, he said, feed them so that they may mature and grow in their relationships with God and with each other.

Lloyd, in responding to the charge, expressed his excitement at the work. Picking up on both charges, he asked for prayer and help in doing the work to which he had been called. He asked for understanding when he found it necessary to withdraw for prayer and meditation — for time to be alone with God.

What a life!

Philip A. Potter

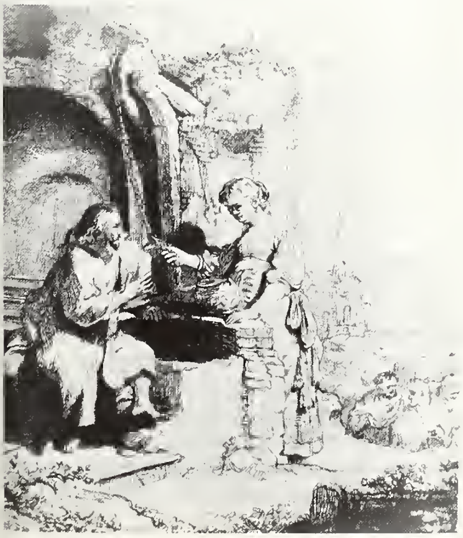
"What a life!" we often sigh when we feel tired, when we cannot cope with our existence, when things do not go well, when we are lost in the complexities of our world, and we grope in the dark and see no future for our life and the life of others.

"What a life!" is the cry of hundreds of millions who have little, who see their loved ones die of starvation, whose labor brings no reward, whose bodies are weak and diseased, who are cast out as refugees and have nowhere to go or are chased from where they go.

"What a life!" exclaim millions who protest against the wasting of material and human resources, the polluting of air and earth, the manipulation of life, the exploitation of people's bodies for selfish and fleeting pleasures, the loss of a sense of meaning in a world where no one seems to heed the threats to life.

"What a life!" is the daily expression of dark despair of those who are denied the right to a fruitful life because of their sex or race or class, or because they challenge the forces of the denial of life and are silenced, imprisoned, tortured, treated as if they had never lived, and end up in the darkness of death by their persecutors.

"What a life!" came to the woman at the well after she met Jesus Christ. This drawing by Rembrandt Harmenszoon van Rijn (1606-69) is entitled "Jesus with Woman at the Well."



What a life for those who do not know from one meal to the next whether there will be any food!

"What a life!" is the shrug of the shoulder of those who conspire against life in order at all costs to preserve their own way of life or national security, as they coldly calculate the ways of surviving as merchants of death through military or terrorist war with arms and economic war without arms.

"What a life?" That question was put long ago by James to believers scattered around his world. James responded with the words: "You are a mist that appears for a little time and then vanishes. Instead you ought to say, 'If the Lord wills, we shall live and we shall do this or that' " (4:14-15).

"If the Lord wills." At this new year, our sigh, our cry, our dark despair, our cynical shrug is answered by the message that the Lord has willed our life. His will was his Word. And as the Gospel of John declares, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. . . . In him was life, and the life was the light of human beings" (1:1-4). God's will, his Word became flesh, taking on our human life, that we may have life and have it in all its grace and truth in the freedom to give ourselves for others.

This was no cheap grace or glib truth, for John goes on to say, "The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it" (1:5). Our sigh and cry of "What a life!" is said in the darkness which threatens to overcome us and snuff out our life. The message of him who became our life, Jesus Christ, is that his life, his freedom to love and give, to be open and illumine our existence, has shone through the darkness of denial and death. He, our risen Lord, shines in the darkness of our world. He says to us, "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears my word and believes God who sent me, has eternal life; he does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life" (John 5:24).

What a life! It is a life in "Jesus Christ — the life of the world." In Jesus Christ we stake our lives on the conviction that life is a gift of God, that God's gift of life with Christ enables us by faith to overcome the forces of death, that life in Christ is ours in all its fullness and that this life unites us with all in love.

This conviction is a vocation, and this vocation is a promise, for he who is our life shines in the darkness, and the darkness cannot overcome us. And he who is life shines in love. May we open our hearts to the coming of this life in love for the whole world. "We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the sisters and brothers" (1 John 3:14).

I believe in Bible institutes

Phil Bender

I like to explain what makes a Mennonite Bible institute unique.

A Bible institute, though a post-secondary school, is not — and does not aspire to be — a college. Mennonite Bible institutes are less academically sophisticated than our colleges and lack similar professional accreditation. In the past their distinction was clear-cut — Bible institutes served as alternatives to the public school system.

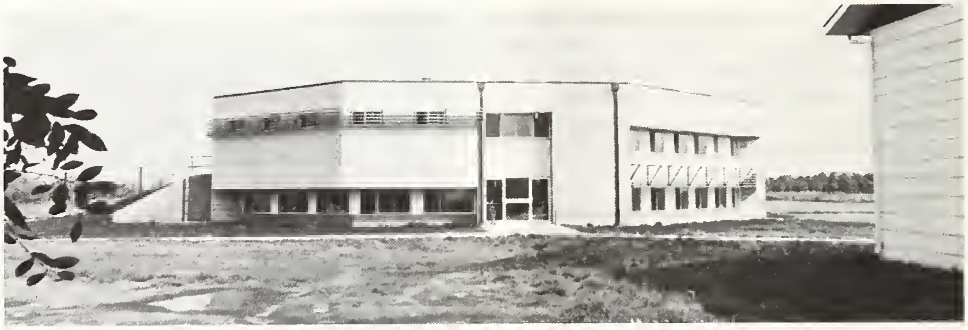
At the same time, the Mennonite Bible institute is a close cousin of the Mennonite college. It offers substantial study programs in Bible, Christian education and church music, taught by teachers who are university- and often seminary-trained — working on a clearly post-secondary level. A Mennonite Bible institute today could be properly envisaged as a specialized junior college.

A Bible institute is more practical than academic. Bible institutes provide training which, beyond fostering personal growth, is serviceable in the congregation. Bible institutes involve students in courses, service programs and extracurricular activities which cultivate certain skills and deepen an understanding of ministry.

However, the slogan "more practical than academic" does not exhaust the essence of a Bible institute because (1) credible, full-bodied academic work does take place simultaneously with the practical training, and (2) Bible colleges also offer practical lay training.

Another way to capture the elusive uniqueness of a Bible institute is to consider the student who attends. Sometimes Bible institutes are stepping-stones for young people from high school to college or university. But more often the typical Bible institute student will not choose to pursue further studies. His or her orientation is not primarily academic.

The students do desire a course of study beyond high school which will help solidify them in their Christian faith. Formal study in greater depth of their faith tradition. Living and growing within a close-knit Christian residential community. At the end of a year or two these students usually emerge appreciably more mature in intellectual comprehension of faith, in a sense of personal self-confidence and facility in peer relationships, and in ability to serve helpfully in congregations.


The new administration-classroom complex of Elim Bible Institute at Altona, Man.

There are still other inherent distinctives in a Bible institute program. Rather than categorical, these tend to be in shades, nuances, accents, tones and tendencies when compared to the standard post-secondary school options of Bible college and university.

First, Mennonite Bible institutes are distinctive by offering specialized Bible and related training suited to the level and needs of that large segment of the Mennonite youth which does not elect college. It is sound, credible training designed to ground these maturing lay people more deeply in their faith, to stimulate an appreciation of the Anabaptist tradition, to awaken new dimensions of discipleship to Jesus and to provide tools for serving within their congregations.

Second, Mennonite Bible institutes have distinctive potential for learning in Christian community. Living in a close Christian community of students and teachers over an extended period of time fosters growth in Christian character. The daily routines of classes, worship, study, eating, recreation and dormitory life provide numerous opportunities for learning mature caring, forgiveness, discipling, burden-bearing and love. In the crucible of a Bible institute community, values can be formed, faith struggles shared, longstanding issues of personality and identity compassionately dealt with.

Third, a Bible institute has a distinctive opportunity to introduce students to the meaning of service. Through service projects, courses on and off campus, and other experiential learning opportunities students are confronted with human need and instructed in the ways and means of Christian service.

A personal dream. In my own dreams I envision a Bible institute curriculum oriented around service projects in which both students and teachers would participate. Complemented by more traditional academic courses, they would form the structure of each semester's study.

Of course, study, community and service can and do happen in our Mennonite colleges. Yet these schools, because of their academic orientation, are less able to pursue deliberate and diligent non-academic, experiential learnings.

Herein resides the real uniqueness of Bible institutes — they are free. Our Mennonite Bible institutes are free to be bold and innovative in exploiting the learning potential of Christian community and service. Not being bound to the more restrictive academic identity typifying the university, the Bible institute is free to consciously pursue — without apology or compromising of purpose — the goals of character formation, faith development and service training and still teach the Bible.

My wish is that our Mennonite Bible institutes take more advantage of this unique freedom to work in non-traditional learning areas. My wish also is that our churches would better affirm and promote our Bible institutes as a post-secondary educational option every bit as legitimate and useful as the college and university.

MEDITATION

Celebrated hope in Christ

"If you believe in your heart and confess with your mouth, it's a celebration of hope" sang an estimated 2,000 voices as the Mennonite Educational Institute and 16 of the Clearbrook, B.C., area's Mennonite churches began a week of evangelistic services.

The Celebration of Hope, as the week of Oct. 17-22, 1982, came to be known, featured Werner Heidebrecht of Visalia, Calif., pastor of the Visalia Community Church, and Ed Boschman of Bakersfield, Calif., pastor of the Laurelglen Mennonite Brethren Church.

Heidebrecht addressed the evening sessions, open to the community, on Hebrews 11, using the heroes of faith to challenge us to faith. Boschman used 1 Timothy 4:12 as he spoke to senior and junior chapels at MEI on aspects of faith, life, speech, purity and love. Another heavy demand on his time was the 50 or so students that came for counseling.

Organizers of the Celebration of Hope had worked for over a year in planning the event. Neil Klassen of the East Aldergrove (B.C.) Mennonite Brethren Church, chairman of the planning committee, stated that he was "very encouraged" by how the week had gone.

Both the evening and student sessions were geared toward decision making. Perhaps the highlight of both school and evening sessions was the large number of people who responded publicly to the call to commitment and to an invitation for counseling.

Pastor Boschman noted three major types of concerns in his counseling at MEI. There were a number of first-time decisions to receive Jesus as Savior; some came with a general burden to get closer to God; and some came with a particular problem.

It was evident also in the evening sessions that a large proportion of the 70 who came for counseling were youth or young adults. Again there were a number of first-time decisions and many recommitments.

"We wanted a proclamation of the gospel, the good news," stated pastor Klassen. "We wanted Christians renewed; we wanted people to reach out into their neighborhoods and bring their neighbors."

Pastor Heidebrecht noted that the greater impact of the Celebration of Hope had been in "reviving of individuals and the church." But, he said, "a revival in the church is a forerunner to a new thrust in evangelism" into the community.

Klassen noted similarly, "I think we have a long way to go in some of those areas of really breaking through in friendship evangelism." But he noted that some of this was beginning to happen.

Heidebrecht was particularly impressed that "people were hungry to celebrate their faith and to hear God's Word." In an age of economic uncertainty he found that "people desire to go deeper with God rather than to have more."

Ed Boschman said the students were "very receptive and very congenial. They have a lot of energy, which is excellent, yet in moments when we were wanting to zero in on the claims of Christ they were prepared to listen."

Many people came nightly to hear the Word and to celebrate their hope. Wally Sawatzky, principal of MEI, summed up the thoughts of many when he said, "It's been an answer to prayer. We asked for silver and the Lord gave us gold."

Alvin G. Ens

CONTENTS

One of the greatest challenges remaining with us as Christians is to effectively share the new life in Christ in cross-cultural settings. This issue speaks candidly about attempts to win native peoples for Jesus Christ. We have much to learn in this area.

Some people may be offended at witnessing for Christ as "clowns." But it is a growing ministry and we believe you should know why.

Please note how we continue to juxtapose personal faith with our faith together. Events of "local" faith must be balanced by "global" concern. Christ sends us into our homes and into the whole world.

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Marvin and Jeannie Zehr, 4226 Maplecrest Road, Fort Wayne, IN 46815, continue their diary about visiting GC churches last summer.

LaVerna Klippenstein, 584 Berkley St., Winnipeg, MB R3R 1J9, shares an exciting extended family celebration.

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EDITORIAL

The rock still stands

I give credit to those who celebrate years gone by and begin each new year with a resolve to either improve in some area or add a new dimension to their lives. All the more admirable when this reflects a resolution to mature spiritually rather than settle for the status quo.

It is noble for anyone to pause in the midst of overscheduled lives, sit back and reflect on the past while anticipating the future. The proverb is accurate: "If you cannot learn from past mistakes, you can only live to repeat them."

Mennonite churches are sometimes accused of living too much for the past. I suppose such critics mean we refer (even defer?) readily to teachings of Anabaptist leader/thinkers like Menno Simons, Pilgram Marpeck, Hans Denk, Michael Sattler and H. S. Bender.

In my own life I have wondered and warned about "rearview mirror" living in our churches. Too many Mennonites are optimistic only about what they refer to as the "original Anabaptist vision" or the witness of the martyrs.

But I fear more those Christians who scoff at reviewing the year(s) past and want to live only for the present and future. I fear that is a major reason we today hear so little prophecy that has substance. Prophets are born and/or tested in fiery furnaces today as surely as in the days of Jeremiah (living in bondage), Daniel and the seer John (banished to Patmos). That's also why I waste little time reading the instant bestsellers on prophecy which come on today's faddish markets as surely and as regularly as any other fad.

We are still young into 1983. What did we learn from 1982 or any other reflecting that we took time for? (Oh, you didn't take such time yet?) If we were quiet long enough, surely Lebanon, the Falklands, El Salvador and the MX reminded us all of our humanity.

In my meditation on the past, my soul sank to utter despair as it recalled beyond 1982 to June 1981 when our eldest son gave up his life. Keen awareness of my own sinfulness filled me as I reflected upon extended family grievances that seem to worsen rather than to improve. I pray daily for grace and mercy to see new evidences of forgiveness and reconciliation.

But the real justification for a New Year's reflection and resolution goes yet another step. To realize again that we — in spite of our fallenness and inclination to sin — are freed from our slavery to sin. In a sense we have traded slavery to sin for a new discipleship of Jesus Christ ("Christian slavery," as Paul defines it?). Whatever way you interpret our saving relationship to Jesus Christ, it is a realization that there is virtue, hope, promise and peace in what you and I have done and will do in the name of Christ.

There is no utter darkness or ultimate shadow in which we must remain. Even if we have walked there seemingly all by ourselves, we can see the Light of the World, eat the Bread of Life, know the Hope for Eternity — because we are not our own. We are children of the heavenly Father who notices each hair on our heads.

One reflection from 1982 refuses to leave me. In Israel last November we entered the Dome of the Rock — a mosque said to cover Mount Moriah, the rock where Abraham agreed to sacrifice Isaac (Genesis 22), the place David chose for the temple (1 Chronicles 21) and where King Solomon actually built it (2 Chronicles 3).

As we looked at the rock and later discussed its possible history, our Israeli guide said, "Whatever else may have happened as the real history of Moriah, we can be sure that the rock still stands." It reminded me instantly of Abraham's outrageously tragic discussion — from human perception — with his young son Isaac.

Isaac asks, "My father . . . where is the lamb for a burnt offering?" (Genesis 22:7).

Can't you feel the "innards" utterly defeated but also utterly committed as Abraham replies, "God will provide. . ." (22:8)? (No Christian heart can reflect on this event without shedding tears — outer or inner.)

God provided, and the rock still stands. And you and I can build on this solid rock for now and for eternity. I resolve anew to do so. *Bernie Wiebe*

Copies of the 1982 index for *The Mennonite* are available on request from our Winnipeg or Newton offices (see p. 47).

THE MENNONITE

OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST

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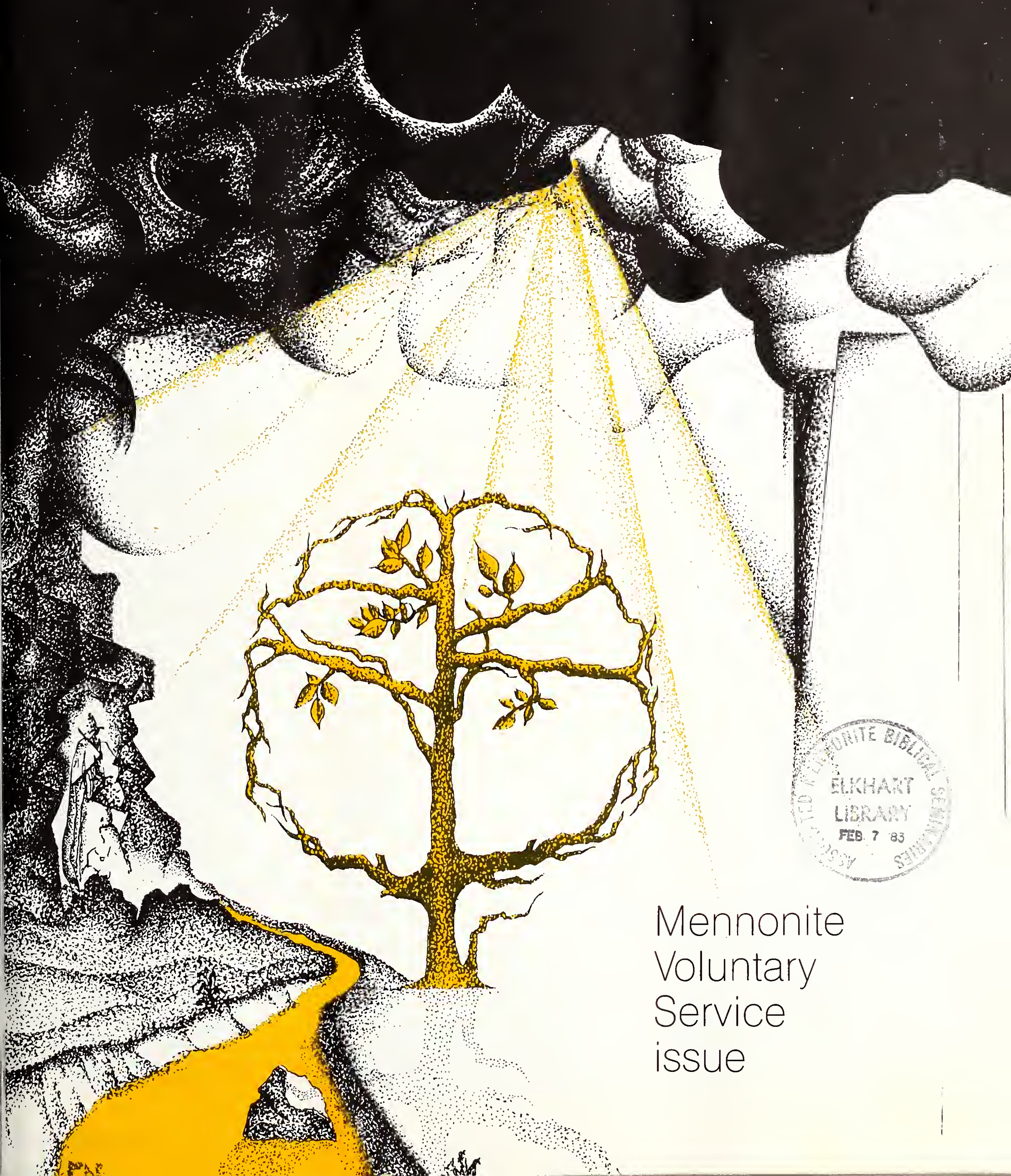

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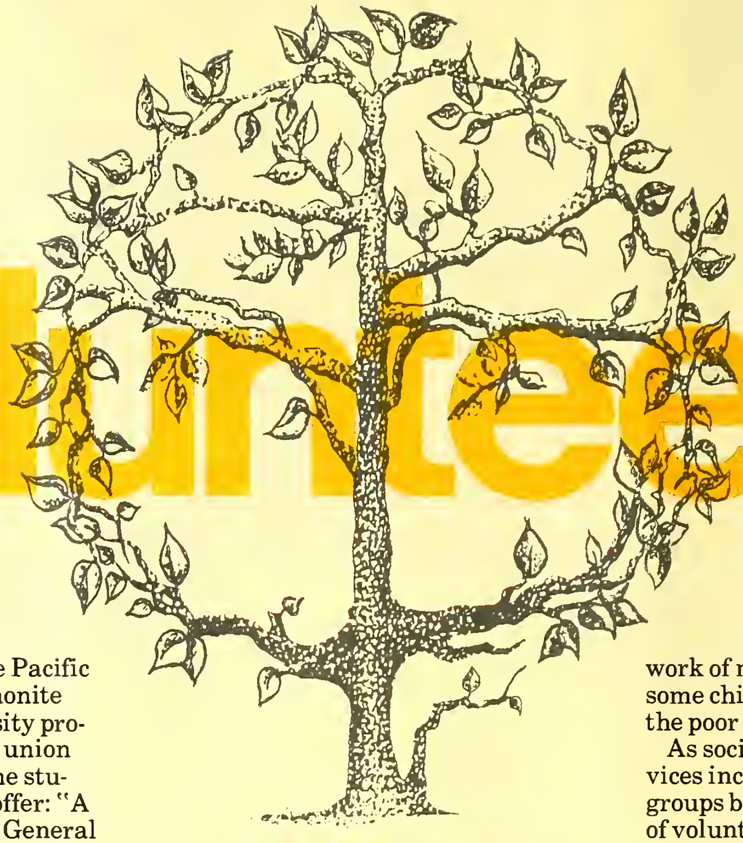


Volunteers: Who needs them?

David Orr

I recently spent a day at Seattle Pacific University recruiting for Mennonite Voluntary Service. The university provides space in the busy student union building for such recruiters. One student came to see what I had to offer: "A high-paying job with Boeing or General Dynamics or perhaps 'not just a job — an adventure' as the army promises . . . Mennonite *Voluntary* Service," he exclaimed when he heard of our program. "Who needs it?"

Who needs it? "Who needs you, buddy?" I thought. Later in a calmer moment I pondered his question further. In a society which prizes professionalism and is driven by profit, volunteers seem somehow second class. If an organization cannot *afford* to hire professionals, it may rely on volunteers. If an individual's skills cannot command a competitive salary, he or she may resort to being a volunteer. What, then, is so special about volunteers? Who really needs them?

Practically everyone needs volunteers. Mennonite Voluntary Service has received a flood of requests during the past two years. Community programs, day-care centers, youth projects and other organizations which are losing CETA workers and Vista volunteers and other or low-cost human resources are requesting people to fill the gap. Inquiries come from prisons losing nurses because of budget cuts, understaffed public school systems and even refugee groups frustrated by the Immigration and Naturalization Service's inability to track down essential records. About the only groups which have not come to MVS seeking volunteers are the armed forces.

There are thousands of community services, schools, other institutions and churches which depend on volunteers for their vitality or even for their existence. Without volunteers many camps and retreat centers would be closed or would have to exclude all but society's elite because of cost.

Innovative programs need volunteers. During the late 1950s and early 1960s volunteers started day-care services in many communities. At that time the only population groups which required child care were single-parent families and families where both parents needed to work to provide for the family support. In other words, day care was a need for the poor long before it became common for women to choose work outside of the home. The dedicated work of many volunteers made wholesome child care an affordable reality for the poor in many communities.

As society's demand for child-care services increased, other private and public groups became involved. Today the role of volunteers is slowly diminishing as child care becomes a professional service. It would have been impossible, however, to *start* many of the child-care centers which are currently hiring staff without the dedicated efforts of volunteers.

New programs need volunteers. Sometimes it is obvious that work needs to be done but funding is not available. In one community a congregation became aware of the plight of emotionally disturbed and mentally retarded adults who were confined to institutions or shut in their homes by their families.

They dreamed of a sheltered workshop which would provide meaningful employment for these people and would offer training that would enable some of them to eventually handle work in the competitive job market.

Despite their best efforts they were unable to find adequate funding to make the workshop a reality. They decided to launch out anyway. Beginning with a director, a too-small budget and a heavy reliance on members of MVS, the sheltered workshop became a reality. Over the years social funding for such programs increased. Today the workshop has several branches, a budget in excess of $1 million and no longer relies upon MVS. If volunteers are able to do work for which adequate funds are not available, needed services can be offered.

Volunteers are free to relate to the people they help as friends instead of simply as clients. One day I asked one MVS volunteer when the assistance center she directed might be able to increase its funding base and end its reliance on MVS. Her response surprised me. She said, "I hope that never happens. The people I work with trust me. I have a special relationship with them. I am the only helping person most of them see who is not getting rich while meeting their needs."

Most of the services which needy people receive are provided by people with far higher standards of living. Doctors, social workers, welfare officials, teachers, landlords and merchants do not share the lives of the poor. They are far more secure. They are better educated, drive nicer cars and live in finer homes. Most do not even share the same part of town with the people they are helping.

Volunteers can have a special kind of credibility with the poor. They usually live in the same communities. Even though their lives are more secure than those of the poor, they are not getting rich. Volunteers are sometimes able to transcend the professional barrier which all too often separates the helpers from those who are helped. A volunteer's concern can more easily be accepted as genuine, not just as "someone doing their job."

Volunteers are free to challenge programs that turn from service to self-service. They are uniquely able to put people's needs ahead of the organizational needs and the demands of bureaucracy.

The Reagan administration has been calling for a resurgence of volunteerism to help the poor in communities across the United States. At the same time it is dismantling Volunteers In Service To America (VISTA), a national service program which provided subsistence support for over 5,000 workers in poor communities. The administration recognized clearly the threat posed by over 5,000 dedicated individuals that it did not control through a monthly paycheck. Volunteers are free to rock the boat and even sink a few.

Volunteers are free to use their gifts in the best ways possible. It is rare that a volunteer will accept a job halfheartedly. In the same way, volunteers are free to not remain beyond their time. When they become stale at a task or lose enthusiasm or simply find that they are not good at what they are doing, they have the freedom to move on to a place where they can make a better contribution.

Most of us lack this freedom. How many would be able to pass up a promotion, more money, power and prestige because we were not as suited to the new job or would not enjoy it as much?

Volunteers are free to give one-hearted service. I once asked a member of MVS how she kept going in a particularly difficult assignment. Her response was, "I don't know, David, but if you were paying me for this, I'd quit."

The director of a boys' club which uses MVS workers in its program told me that even if his agency had all the money it needed to hire staff, he would still want Mennonite Voluntary Service workers. He said, "They bring commitment, dedication and concern for the boys which money just can't buy."

Volunteers have resolved the God *or* mammon question. They have ended the "me *versus* them" balancing act.

Volunteers also have goals. I have a friend who has set himself a goal to become president of a medium-sized corporation by the time he is 35. He once explained to me that, while he admired the work of organizations like Mennonite Voluntary Service, he is going to devote himself to climbing the corporate ladder. He feels that when he reaches the top, or at least as he nears it, he will be able to help society. I have always doubted this. Most companies exist to provide a return to their owners, investors and stockholders. Corporations cannot take the place of individuals who are willing to make commitments *to* and sacrifices *for* others.

It is said that "everyone has his price." A volunteer's price is meeting the needs of others. A volunteer adds will (volition) to his or her loving concern and gets involved. A volunteer subordinates his or her wants and desires to the needs of others.

Volunteers are special because they are responding to Christ's call. This is the final and most important fact. The Mennonite Voluntary Service statement of faith begins: "We emphasize Jesus as Lord and Savior and as the model for our service. We believe that service is based upon following Jesus."

Volunteers are sometimes able to transcend the professional barrier which all too often separates the helpers from those who are helped.

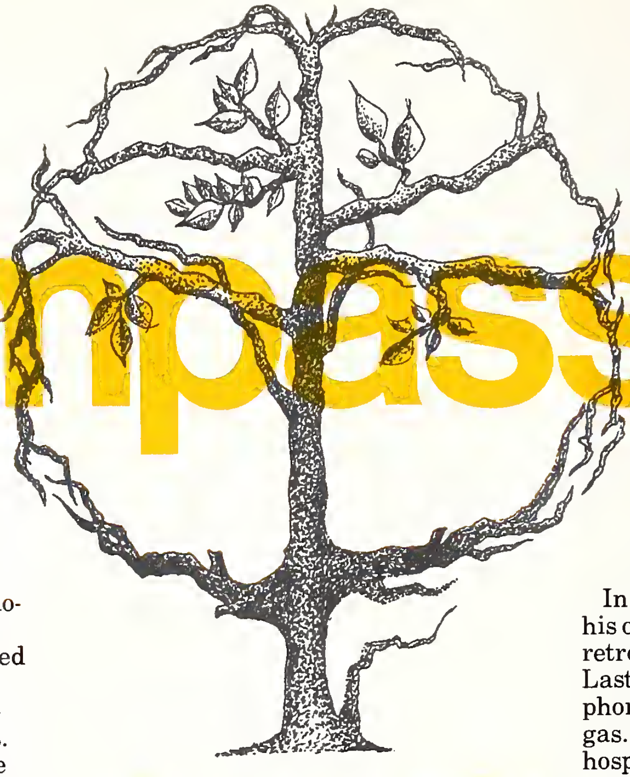
Jesus was a volunteer. I have seen so many bumper stickers about Jesus ("Jesus was a refugee," "Jesus is the real thing," "Honk if you love Jesus!") that the truth of one which proclaimed, "Jesus was a volunteer" did not strike me until recently. He never commanded a competitive salary or benefit package for his ministry. He lacked education in his field. He was not even a member of any professional organization. Jesus was a volunteer.

We now again ask, "Volunteers — Who needs them?" In Jesus' day the question was, "Who needs this Jesus of Nazareth?"

How extraordinary that God would send a volunteer instead of a paid religious professional to serve as Savior of the world. A professional might have done things quite differently. He might have written a series of scholarly books or even founded a religious university. But would such a person have died on the cross?

There are some things you can't pay people to do. Volunteers — we all need at least One. Does God call us each to be one? •

Compassion doesn't get easy



Marilyn F. Fenn

Prayer is dangerous. I entered Mennonite Voluntary Service in November 1981, praying to be stretched, changed and pushed to my limits.

Prayer is dangerous. The Spirit responds. I have experienced my edges.

I am a West Coast transplant to the Iowa cornfields. Ames Mennonite Fellowship invited me to help fertilize *shalom* among the Ames churches, Iowa State University, and Loaves and Fishes Hospitality House.

Taught by the poor. The "poor" have been my greatest teachers and stretchers. Our house-community opens its doors to people in need of food, shelter, clothing and listening. The frustration and loneliness of people who do not experience life as a beautiful "dream" has put me in touch with the dehumanizing qualities of Western industrial society. I have glimpsed our culture through the eyes of its outcasts: the prisoners, the mental patients, the abused women and children, the minimally educated. Our guests have shattered my tidy labels for human beings. The "problem" of poverty has become *people* who are maimed by the ways we exist together.

Labeling was my method of distancing myself from intimate pain and need. Now the poor haunt me. They knock at my bedroom door. They eye me across the dinner table. They hover at my elbow as I cook dinner. Their muted laughter and raw tears invade me through the walls and floorboards. Their life experiences and their values humble me.

Poor people lead sparrows' lives — here and now — struggling daily to survive. They have no energy to waste on thoughts of tomorrow, for today brings cares enough. For me, they have put flesh on Jesus' words.

These people are not perfect or romantic. Prejudice, racism, sexism, physical abuse — all the violences live in them as well as us. But poor people are generous with their time and possessions. They share. It is *the* ethic of the streets and roads.

In brittle midwinter I saw Wally give his only gloves to a man who had none. I retreated to my room to weep in awe. Last cigarettes are shared, coins for phone calls, rides on the last gallon of gas. Ironically, our guests do the best hospitality for one another. In these "under-educated," mentally "disturbed," socially "maladjusted" human beings, God becomes flesh. This is no pretty, perfect God, but a humble, suffering, smelly, serving presence.

Shocked, I have learned that Jesus came to such as these, bringing public proclamation of their freedom. Jesus made space for outcasts, for the same people for whom we have little space or time or food. "God with us" in the smelling clothes and rancid flesh in our living room.

I resist. I am still resistant to this invasion of God. *My* time, *my* room, *my* hat, *my* agenda.

One evening I came home from studying and teaching people about the idolatry of the arms race. My neck ached. I walked in, close to tears, myself wanting to be comforted. In our living room sat a frightened woman. Her sister had kicked and broken her ribs and smashed her skull with a telephone. The hospital taped her up and turned her out on the streets with no place to go. Resentfully, I listened to her story, talked her upstairs, peeled polyester pants from her body and gentled her into bed. Slightly sorry for my attitude, I smoothed her hair back from her brow. The touch loosed her tears. She sobbed of her alcoholism, her beatings, her divorce, her loneliness

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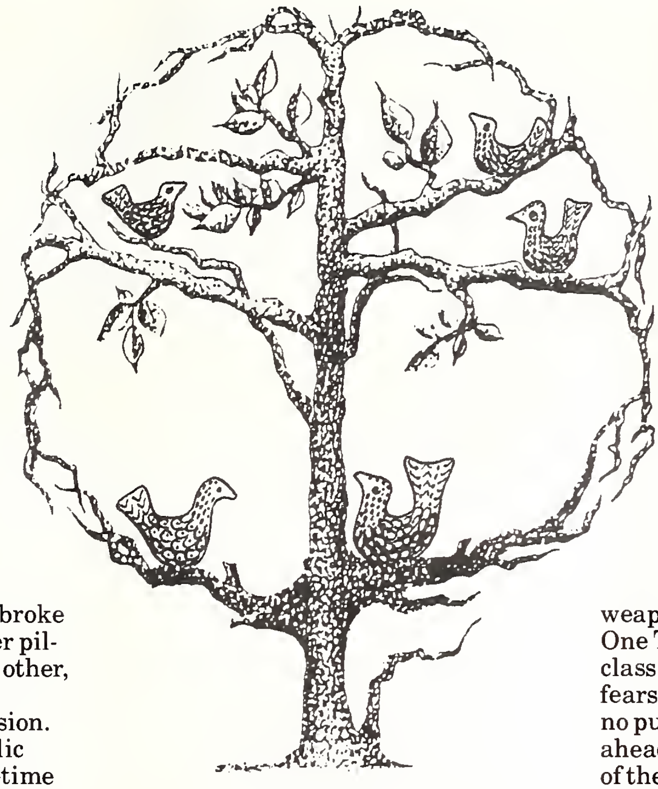


Poor people lead sparrows' lives — here and now — struggling daily to survive. . . . For me they have put flesh on Jesus' words.

— mostly her loneliness. Her cries broke my hard heart. I lay my head on her pillow and we wept together, for each other, with each other.

Yet I remain resistant to compassion. Dorothy Day, founder of the Catholic Worker movement, said after a lifetime of doing hospitality, "We suffer these things and they fade from memory. But daily, hourly, to give up our own possessions and especially to subordinate our own impulses and wishes to others — these are hard, hard things, and I don't think they ever get any easier."

Easier? No, but as I acknowledge my own weaknesses and refuse to play my "I-am-strong-and-together" games, my own wounds are exposed. As I begin to heal, I am freed to be part of the possible healing of others.

People come to us who have been deeply wounded by institutions designed to heal or reform them. In contrast, listening, laughing, crying, eating together, telling stories . . . these at least seem to do little harm. I have learned that people are incredibly tough and terribly fragile. All need gentleness.

Peace education. This knowledge goes with me as I work at public peace education. I speak to congregations trapped in the fear that we need nuclear weapons, that they protect us from our enemies. I try to share the fact that the weapons will destroy us all and that they are killing the poor around the globe already. I describe the victims who come to our house: the woman with four children whose shrunken ADC check no longer pays the rent; the high school dropout whose CETA job died; the emotionally disturbed and chemically dependent for whom there are no halfway houses. The military budget robs them.

The ex-prisoners who have stayed with us have taught me about our justice system. Their wisdom goes with me as I coordinate New Vision, an ecumenical peace and justice library. A few weeks ago, a man dropped in to talk about the need for prisons and capital punishment. I told him about Sam, emotionally crippled by a year in a federal pen. I told him of Dan, sent to jail on drug charges. There he found the easiest access to drugs in his life. We ended up talking about alternatives to penal systems.

People are desperate for alternatives. I co-teach a university class called "Inquiry into Disarmament." Fifteen students face the realities of nuclear weapons for the first time in their lives. One Thursday, Carol remained after class. She slowly began to name her fears: no future, no chance to give birth, no purpose in studying or planning ahead. We cried; we hugged. We talked of the alternatives of active hope rather than naive optimism or despair.

Every student began the class with the assumption that the military is a necessity. Now we are discussing the conversion of industries, foreign policies, lifestyles and values. For the first time these people are imagining the power of non-violence.

I felt called to a new way. In the midst of teaching, Freeze campaign work, tax resistance education, organizing support for registration resisters and living with poor people, I began to feel a new call to peacemaking. The Spirit seemed to invite me to embody "yes to life" and "no to death." On June 14, 1982, I entered the way of direct obedience — what some call civil disobedience.

Two days after the massive disarmament rally in New York, I joined 1,600 others in asking the five countries who lead the global arms race to reconsider their roles. We blocked the doors of the UN missons of China, France, Britain, the United States and the Soviet Union. We asked personnel to call in sick with "disarmament fever." Our plea was illegal. As Daniel Berrigan said at last summer's New Call to Peacemaking conference, "To be found 'just' biblically is to be found 'criminal' in America."

On Aug. 9 it then felt natural to join 58 Midwesterners — mothers, grandparents, farmers, nurses, nuns and pastors — in a peaceful invasion of the Strategic Air Command (SAC) base near Omaha, Neb. The launching system for all U.S. air-and land-based warheads resides at SAC. In a heavy rain, at 11:02 a.m., we walked into the eye of the beast, 37 years (to the minute) after the atomic destruction of Nagasaki.

The military police who carried us away refused our offerings of Japanese peace cranes, but many military personnel returned our peace signs as guards drove us through the base on our way to be fingerprinted. The process consumed six hours. We sang songs of hope and challenge. Our guards laughed and teased us. We became human beings to each other.

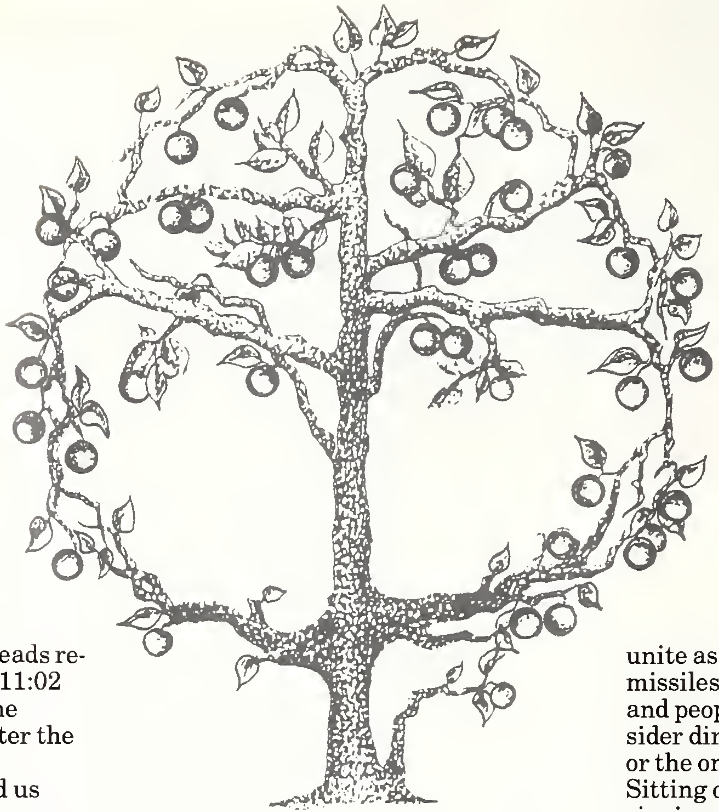
Against her commander's orders, one career military person accepted a statement explaining our invasion of the base. She slipped it into her boot. After the FBI entered and arrested two registration resisters, she slipped money to us for their defense fund. Conversions happen.

Primarily, civil disobedience converts the participants to a deeper commitment to peace. Spirit, mind and body unite as one faces clubs and guns and missiles, armed only with the love of life and people and God. Yet, I do not consider direct obedience *the* most faithful or the only response to the arms race. Sitting on a missile silo lid and sitting sipping tea with a hurting person are equally compassionate.

One year later. One year later, compassion ("to suffer with") has become my model of peacemaking. I understand my call as a combination of helping people in need, educating for peace and justice and physically opposing militarism. In each sphere I have learned that offering a new vision of human community is *essential* to criticizing the old.

Most starkly, I have discovered my deep need of spiritual roots. As I have faced personal and political brokenness, I have found myself running to the silence of meditation, begging for Spirit-strength to go on. In the pain and glee, God has been my glue.

More than ever, I am convinced that prayer is dangerous . . . and essential. •



I entered MVS in November 1981 praying to be stretched, changed and pushed to my limits. . . . I have experienced my edges.

I grew as I served

Susan Withers

Her face like worn brown leather
lined with wrinkles
showed the years
of smiles
and pain.
Curled at her feet
I listened
her stories
filled my mind
I watched her hands
long and so fragile
circle the air.
I breathed in the tales
of long ago
and faraway places
I dreamt her dreams
and felt her pain.
I noticed her eyes
crinkle with laughter
and then mist with tears.
Time stood still.
Slowly I unfolded my legs
I held her hand
I walked away
knowing
I had grown.

Losers and finders (Mark 8:27-35)

Peter J. Ediger

The Christian church went on with her disciples
through the '60s and '70s and into the '80s.
And on the way the church asked her disciples:
Who do people say that I am?
And they said:
Some say you are conservative,
and some say you are liberal;
some say you are unfaithful,
and some say you are salt and light for the world.
And the church asked her disciples:
But who do you say that I am?
And they answered her:
You are the body of the Christ,
You are the Messiah.
And she charged the disciples to tell no one.
And the church began to teach her disciples
that she must suffer many things
and be rejected by leaders of the established order
and face death, and after death rise again to new life.
And the church said this plainly.
And some of the disciples began to rebuke the church
for this kind of teaching. But turning to them,
the church said:
Get behind us, Satan.
For you are not on the side of God,
but of fallen humanity.
And the church called to the multitude and said to them:
If any church would come after me
let her deny herself and take up her cross
and follow me.
For the church which would save her life will lose it;
and the church which loses her life
for my sake and the gospel's will find it.

In Mark 8, Jesus is at a pivotal point in his ministry.
After several years of teaching, preaching and healing,
he has gained both enthusiastic following and growing opposition.
Then comes the crucial question — Who am I?
And the awesome revelation — you are the Christ.
And the strange response — tell no one.
And the hard teaching — I must suffer and die.
And the rebuke — No!
And the counter-rebuke — get behind me, Satan.
And the invitation — take up the cross and follow.
And the paradoxical proclamation — Whoever would save her life will lose it:
Whoever loses her life for my sake and the gospel's will find it.
What does this mean?
What does this mean for the Christian church in the '80s?
What does this mean for the Mennonite church in today's world?

The story from Mark 8 suggests three things for today's church.

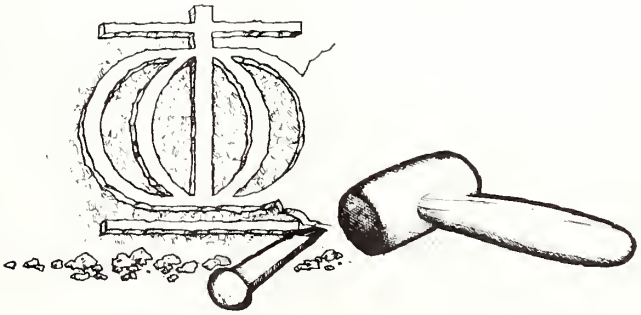
First, there is a strong affirmation of the church as the messianic community. What are we doing with that? What are we doing with the awareness of our identity as the body of the Messiah? Do we understand and accept the call to be God's saving body in the world?

Secondly, there is a clear warning to be careful with the question of identity — tell no one . . . till we have understood the nature of the Messiah.

Tell no one — preachers promising privilege and prosperity — tell no one of your Messiah till you have walked with Jesus and learned of the suffering Messiah. Tell no one — entrepreneurs of evangelism charting your growth in computers — tell no one of your Messiah till you have tested your growth in the cross. Tell no one — Christian militia in Lebanon or Lynchburg — tell no one of your Messiah till you have followed the Christ to the cross. Tell no one — Mennonites in middle America paying for production of massive weapons systems — tell no one of your Messiah till you have risked your respectability in following the defenseless Christ.

Thirdly, there is a call for the clear proclamation of the gospel — "whoever loses her life for the sake of Christ and the gospel will find it." We are called to speak clearly and say, "The faithful church is a dying institution; in dying for the sake of the gospel the church finds its life. The congregation — the conference — the church institution which seeks to save itself will lose it; the congregation-conference-institution willing to risk and lose its life for the sake of Christ and the gospel will find it."

The church which seeks to save herself by not sharing the bread of life with sinners will lose her life; the church willing to risk its spiritual health by breaking bread with sinners will find life. The church which seeks to save herself in comfortable affluence by isolating herself from the poor will lose her life; the church willing to lose her assets for the sake of the kingdom will find the pearl of great price — her life. The church which seeks to save her security by following only "legal, legislative and judicial avenues" to salve its war tax conscience will lose her life; the church willing to lose her security in supporting non-registrants for the sake of Christ will find life. The church which seeks to save its members for her own life will lose her life; the church willing to lose her members in service of Christ and the gospel will find her life.
Which church are we?
Which Messiah are we following?
Who are we?
The whole creation is eagerly waiting for our response (Romans 8:19).



Their pain is our pain

Lila Gracey

Last July I began my third year with Mennonite Voluntary Service. The journey from who I was before I left state government work to who I am now has been exciting and sometimes frightening. Although MVS does not get all the credit or blame, it has been an important part of my life.

In VS I have had the freedom to explore a new, simpler lifestyle without constant worry about money. I have been able to seek answers to questions I never even dreamed before. I have had the safety of the institutional church behind me wherever I've gone and I've been given love and acceptance by the Mennonite community simply because I am in MVS. All of these things are freeing. I have discovered that there is no limit to the exciting questions one can ask and no boundaries to the love one can feel when surrounded by people who care and a community which provides support — physical, emotional and spiritual. Those have all been part of my VS experience.

Why then do I struggle and sometimes feel uncomfortable with the very things I've found so freeing? Perhaps it is because there really is no limit to the questions one can and should ask and because some of the answers are disturbing.

Since I joined MVS I've been working with the (Colorado Springs, Colo.) Center on Law and Pacifism, devoting most of my time to learning about and working with and against the criminal punishment system. A world four years ago virtually unknown to me now all but consumes my life. After three years of visiting prisoners, talking with wardens, administrators and guards, listening to the cries of victims, driving prisoners' families to the prison for visits, leading workshops on alternatives, sharing the first few hours with someone immediately after their release, I am heartsick, I am sad, I am frightened and I am angry.

I am heartsick when I feel the pain — the terrible pain of all who are involved with the criminal punishment system. Judges are frustrated and hurting because in their world of law there are few humane alternatives. Victims are twice victimized — first by the initial crime and then by a system that casts them aside. Guards become victims in a system which gives them power they as humans cannot handle. Prisoners and their families suffer dehumanization at every level and every turn. And all of us suffer in our fear and ignorance of what is going on around us.

I am sad when I see that the response to these frustrations is generally violent — either physically or emotionally — but almost always brutal. The brutality comes from things done generally by those directly in the system, or things not done by those of us outside the system. I am sad because it seems so easy, so natural for us to forget we are all part of everything.

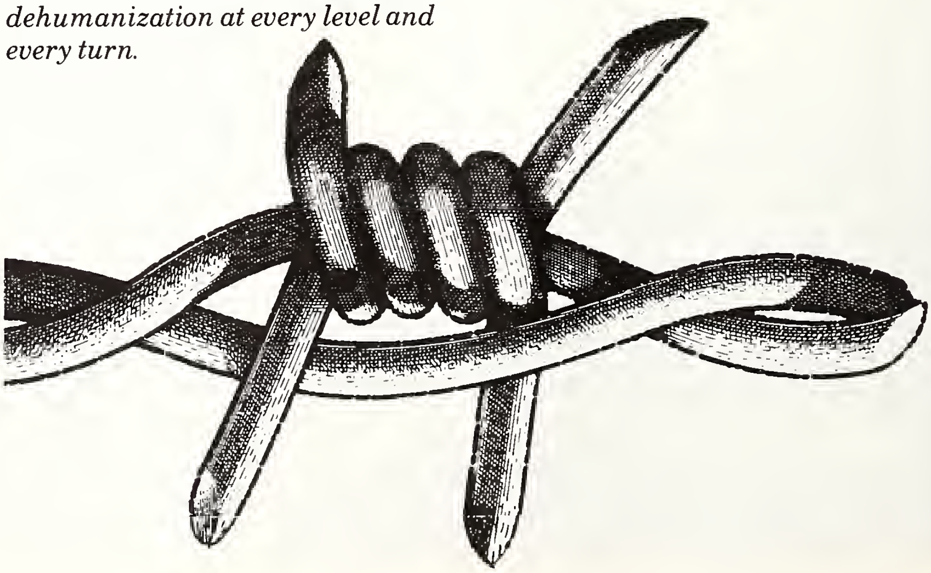
I am frightened when the same question haunts me over and over: What do we do? As individuals, as volunteers, as an institutional church and as loving creations of God: What do we do? How must we respond to the violent institutions with which we are so connected? What must we as Christians do? An easy part of the answer for me is that we must do something. Beyond that the answer is not so easy.

My anger comes when I feel that as Christians we cannot even agree on the easy part of the answer — that we must do something. I am grateful that MVS is one place where that part of the answer is understood and acted upon. But what about the more difficult part of the answer — the how, what, why, when and where?

In my experience I have come to believe that all systems are inherently dehumanizing — the larger the system the greater the dehumanization. When I look at the criminal punishment system — specifically jails and prisons — which functions through coercion, power, punishment and brutality, I have to ask myself what is the role of the church.

The role of the church — God's people. The Old Testament legal ethic was guided by the principle of restitution. When the law was broken, there was corporate responsibility. Violence and breach of law pointed to a crisis in the fabric of society. For Israel, the fullest response to crime was not the isolated punishment of an individual lawbreaker, but the repentance of the entire nation (Griffith, "Alternatives to Calling the Police: Some Biblical and His-

Prisoners and their families suffer dehumanization at every level and every turn.



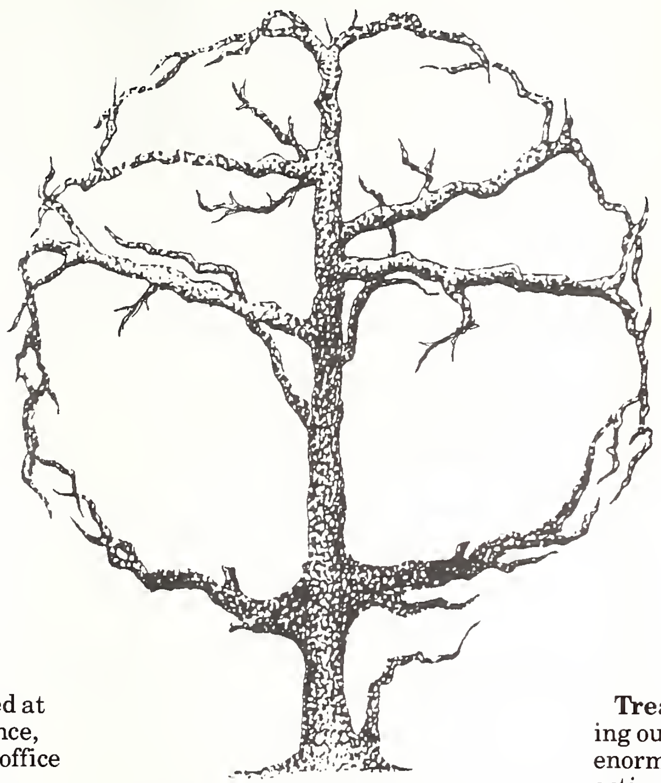
torical Perspectives," p. 3, presented at "The Christian as Victim" conference, April 1-3, 1982, sponsored by MCC office of criminal justice).

Jesus' teachings of unconditional/nonreciprocal love, forgiveness, turning the other cheek, caring and release to the captives, are in direct opposition to the foundation of prisons. As followers of Jesus what then must we do? Jesus made lots of waves in the church and social order of his time. Have we become so involved with the current order of things that we fail to make waves? The church is heavily involved in jail and prison business. A recent chaplains' manual suggests that "the prison chaplain supplements and reinforces other professional treatment." And the 1959 American Correctional Association's *Manual of Standards* says, "it is felt . . . that the teaching of the church can be put into operation in any institution and need never impose upon the institutions a program in conflict with good correctional management" (*Ibid*, p. 9). Unfortunately, the association is reflecting the evidence that the church seems to have lost sight of the true meaning of Jesus' proclamation of release to the captives.

A further illustration of the diluting of the gospel is evidenced by a conference for wardens and prison chaplains held in an eastern state entitled "Partners in Progress." How can the church profess to follow Jesus and be partners in punishment at the same time? My conclusion is that we cannot.

What then can we do? Perhaps we must first visit those currently imprisoned: hear what they are saying, feel their pain, understand and know their oppression and personally do what we can for them. Such visits can enable us to share some of our monetary wealth, make phone calls, write letters, simply listen or share our thoughts and feelings. Those are all important things we can give someone who is being oppressed. But our time is limited, we can touch so few people that way. What about the hundreds of thousands imprisoned whom we cannot reach personally? What about the pain of those who are yet to be imprisoned?

Their pain is our pain and the two are inseparable. We must go beyond visiting. That is why the vision of oneness with each other and with God is important. If we maintain that vision we will not be able to remain ignorant or silent in the face of oppression. We will have to speak and act our commitment to wholeness with each other regardless of the consequences to ourselves or to programs with which we may be affiliated. To be satisfied with only visiting those in prison makes our becoming part of the unjust system perhaps inevitable.



"I have had the safety of the church behind me wherever I've gone and I've been given love and acceptance by the Mennonite community simply because I am in MVS."

Treatment and prevention. Reaching out to individuals oppressed by an enormous system without speaking and acting out against that system is like treating a disease *after* it has infected us. We need prevention and/or the cure.

What I'm proposing is not easy and there are no blueprints. Jails are closed institutions and in order to visit within their walls certain rules must be followed and various games must be played. Our struggle hopefully comes with constantly asking ourselves to what are we being more faithful — our vision of oneness and wholeness or our desire to have access to those who are currently imprisoned.

All of us have experienced the fear of losing something important to us as a result of being faithful to our beliefs only to discover that with every door closed to us many more open through faith. Perhaps a few more prison doors need to be closed to us so that we can begin to experience and live our faith more fully.

My hope is that we will continually ask ourselves where in our lives we are speaking out and acting out against oppression for justice. And where in our lives as individuals, as MVS workers, as the institutional church are we allowing and/or encouraging — by omission, commission or complicity — oppression and oppressive systems to continue?

The prison ministry is financed strictly through voluntary contributions. Your contributions may be sent to: *Colorado Springs MVS, Box 1584, Colorado Springs, CO 80901.*

"God Requires Justice" was the theme for the 18th annual meeting of MCC (Alberta), held Nov. 26-27, 1982, in Coaldale, Alta. The guest speaker, Hugo Jantz, secretary for communications for Mennonite Brethren Missions/Services, dealt with it in three topics: (1) "Justice — a Biblical Teaching," (2) "Injustice — a Worldwide Tragedy" and (3) "Doing Justice — a Christian Commitment." The MCC Players depicted some of the past and present activities of MCC in short skits, showing its strengths and weaknesses. A budget of $1,297,500 (lower than last year) was approved. A lively discussion was precipitated by the report of the participation of the peace and social concerns committee at the Nuclear Energy Conference in Waterloo, Ont., in October. On the one hand, it was felt that a radical stand against taxation and militarism could jeopardize government assistance and put Mennonites in a less favorable position. Others felt that as a peace church, Mennonites must take that stand. A proposed resolution in favor of the former was narrowly defeated. The peace and social concerns committee was given approval to employ the M2 program coordinator, Graham Reddoch, full time. The program was initiated last year on a half-time basis.

NEWS

Sanctuary: Community Church takes the bold step

Chicago — Following a series of informal and formal meetings, members of Community Mennonite Church in Markham, Ill., have declared their church property a sanctuary for undocumented refugees caught between repressive regimes in Central America and the U.S. government's Immigration and Naturalization Service.

By its action, Community Church joins a growing number of Chicago-area congregations that are concerning themselves with the plight of such refugees, especially Salvadorans. Many are cooperating with the city's ecumenical Religious Task Force on Central America in either declaring themselves as sanctuaries or becoming part of a new underground railroad for refugees in the United States and Canada.

Churches acting as sanctuaries take in refugee families who have agreed to join the congregation in publicly raising consciousness about the predicament of illegal aliens like themselves, thereby risking their own safety. Other churches cooperating with the task force provide aid, transportation and shelter to individuals from countries such as El Salvador and Guatemala who face near-certain death if deported by INS.

The task force makes its list of sanctuaries public and provides a list of those congregations to INS, despite the fact that members of those churches face stiff fines and prison terms if prosecuted and convicted for harboring fugitives.

"Temporary housing is the greatest need of refugees in our area right now," said Margaretha Ediger, co-pastor of Community Mennonite Church. "Because we have limited space we are not sheltering anyone at present, but we are looking for additional facilities. Yet we are already able to help in other ways, and we hope to get other churches in the Chicago suburbs involved in this type of assistance." Ediger and her husband, Menno, already share their home with Hope Community Services, an agency which assists persons in distress.

Community Mennonite Church took its action on Nov. 28 during a special congregational meeting which followed study of Mennonite Central Committee resource materials on the subject and meetings with Dan Dale of the Chicago Religious Task Force on Central America. "We are setting out on a new road, taking a national problem and making it a personal and local responsibility. Please pray for us as we begin the challenging task of assuming care for and involvement with Salvadorans and other Central Americans in flight," said Richard Rose, service and outreach deacon for the church.

Meanwhile, the U.S. State Department is continuing its policy of not

Edigers and Rose (right): making a national problem a local responsibility

COMMUNITY
MENNONITE
CHURCH
SUNDAY SCHOOL 9:30
WORSHIP 10:30
DAYCARE
WELCOME

The adoption of an action strategy and the appointment of interim staff have signaled the countdown toward a new, more broadly representative association of churches in Canada. The new organization, the Inter-Church Committee/ Comite Inter-Eglises, is to include the full range of Canadian churches, from the Anglican, Protestant and Evangelical through the Orthodox and Roman Catholic. Canada's bilingual policy is also being taken seriously.

Roman Catholic bishops in the United States recently moved toward coordinating with Protestants the themes of weekly worship in local churches. The bishops approved for three-year trial use at selected sites an interchurch adaptation of the lectionary, the yearly schedule of Bible readings used in Sunday worship and on which homilies usually are based. Denominations involved in the experiment include Lutherans, Presbyterians, United Methodists, Episcopalians, Disciples of Christ, United Church of Christ and both the Anglican Church and United Church of Canada.

An estimated 225,000 to 3 million people are living in the streets of America's cities, according to recent testimony given to a congressional subcommittee. "No longer are they just the alcoholics and unemployables," commented James Buchanan of United Press International. "They now include out-of-work former members of the middle class."

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granting political asylum to fugitives from countries like El Salvador, where they consider conditions not to be serious enough to warrant the special measure for refugees in the U.S. Yet according to *Sojourners*, 33,000 people have died in the civil war there over the past two years.

The magazine reports in its December 1982 issue that in 1980 "none of the almost 12,000 Salvadorans who applied was granted political refugee status. A total of 11,792 refugees was deported, either through 'voluntary' or involuntary departure status, according to the Central America Refugee Center. Of 5,559 applications for political asylum in 1981, the INS granted only two."

Many of the 500 refugees returned to El Salvador by the INS each month are later executed, says the magazine. *Larry Cornies*

Community Church struggles with the sanctuary decision: (left to right) member Ivorie Lowe, church chair David Ewert, church secretary Shirley Haveck, Edigers.

Conference closes 1982 books with 92.7 percent of budget

Newton, Kan. — Despite yet another record-breaking December, giving to General Conference causes in 1982 stood at 92.7 percent of budget as the books on the year were closed in mid-January.

A total of $4,693,600 was earmarked for conference programs during the year, up more than $170,000 over 1981. Yet the rate of giving did not keep up with goals set by conference officers nearly a year ago, when they approved the $5,064,530 1982 budget.

Although the year-end picture reflected a shortfall of $370,930, contributions to General Conference causes in December reached another all-time high, as more than $1.3 million rolled into central office coffers in that month alone, surpassing December 1981's previous record by nearly $71,000.

Total 1982 receipts for each of the conference's four main programs were as follows: Commission on Overseas Mission, $3,036,997; Commission on Home Ministries, $855,031; Commission on Education, $378,457; and Mennonite Biblical Seminary, $423,115.

Each of the three commissions received 92.3 percent of their '82 budgets. Mennonite Biblical Seminary, however, did significantly better with 97.1 percent. The General Conference's Women in Mission came in with 96.6 percent, the first time in years that WM's income has fallen below 100 percent.

Because the 1982 budget shortfall had been foreseen by conference administrators since late summer, some programming was curtailed during the fall months resulting in expenditures for the year of slightly above income levels.

The Division of Administration and General Board will wrestle with whether or not the total 1983 budget should be higher than the 1982 askings when Council of Commissions convenes in Newton in March.

Meanwhile, the DA staff is carrying out a planned alteration of the conference's fiscal year. Instead of running January to December, the new financial year will run February to January beginning next month. January 1983 will be treated as a separate fiscal period.

"Because November and December giving is so heavy, it has been almost impossible to see early on where we'll be at the end of the fiscal year," says conference treasurer Ted Stuckey of the shift. "The new fiscal year will allow us more time to make adjustments on the expenditure side and to plan for the following year.

"Regarding 1982, the conference owes sincere thanks for the money it received from constituents despite the difficult economic times. We know that many people made sacrifices. As we move into 1983, we want to maintain our vision and pursue our church's work as far as is financially possible." *Larry Cornies*

Pornographic materials have begun to disappear from the newsracks of stores in Mesa, Ariz. Many local shopkeepers have voluntarily removed the materials from their establishments at the urging of the Mesa Decency Coalition, which conducted a "public awareness" campaign.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has separated abortion activities from all family-planning services financed by the federal government. According to the Public Health Service Act, no federal funds may be used for "programs where abortion is a method of family planning." The new guidelines also prohibit family-planning and abortion clinics from sharing office space, personnel, publications, stationery, and medical equipment or supplies.

The All-Unit Mennonite Disaster Service annual meeting will be held Feb. 11-12 at the Coaldale Mennonite Church, Coaldale, Alta.

A workshop for retired ministers and church workers, their spouses and widows will be held Feb. 15 at the Bethel College Mennonite Church in North Newton, Kan. Sponsored by the Western District committee on the ministry and the Inter-Mennonite Council on Aging, the workshop will feature presentations dealing with independent and creative living for both men and women.

Midwestern Bible conference focuses lessons from Ephesians

Hutchinson, Kan. — The Brethren-Mennonite Bible Conference held Jan. 14-16 in the First Methodist Church here involved more than 200 people. Elmer A. Martens, president of Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary, Fresno, Calif., was the main speaker and focused the attention of participants on the Book of Ephesians.

The idea for such conferences began with the Council of Moderators and Secretaries, a group of inter-Mennonite church leaders, in 1981, when they abandoned plans for a North American Bible conference in favor of several regional conferences. Cooperating groups in the Midwest included the Brethren in Christ, Church of the Brethren, General Conference Mennonite, MCC Central States, Mennonite Brethren and Mennonite Church.

Martens gave four major talks on Friday evening, Saturday morning and afternoon and Sunday morning. His unique handling of Ephesians linked the theological (chapters 1-3) with the practical (chapters 4-6).

Martens

Martens spoke first on "The Church: Partners in a Giant Offensive." He highlighted the personal, corporate and cosmic dimensions of salvation in the texts. "Just think," he said, "this Jesus Christ, bringer together of cosmic harmony, is our Lord."

In "The Church: Transformed People Transforming Prevailing Patterns," he explained how people — dead, dominated and doomed — can become saved to be alive in a new environment as God's masterpiece. "The church is God's poem," he said. "It represents a transformed people."

His third talk was on "The Church: Reconciling Because Reconciled." Referring to the Jews and Gentiles' reconciliation, Martens said, "God is the God of gaps. God's purpose was to make one new being out of the two." He outlined the practical implications of reconciliation, such as speaking truthfully, forgiving and living a life of love.

Martens climaxed his series Sunday with "The Church: Gifted for Unity Against Divisiveness." God gives the church unity, but threats to it are pride and a lack of patience, he said.

Workshops held on Saturday centered on peace churches, the family, prayer, the Holy Spirit, barriers to faith, unity and disunity, Martens' presentations and relating to inactive members.
Marion Keeney Preheim

Aid planned for Vietnamese typhoon victims

Akron, Pa. (MCC) — On Oct. 20, 1982, Typhoon Nancy released a ferocious attack on north central Vietnam. The typhoon's winds, heavy rains and resulting floods and tidal waves affected 2 million people in the Nghe Tinh, Thanh Hoa, Ha Nam Ninh and Thai Binh provinces. Factories, schools, hospitals and homes were destroyed, electrical lines were torn down, dykes, roads and bridges were damaged, and 70 people were killed. According to officials, the most immediate needs now facing disaster victims are for medicine, adequate clothing and food. Shortages of food will likely persist at least until June, when the next rice crop is harvested, and full recovery may not be realized for some time.

In response to the crisis, "a people-helping-people movement was immediately launched" within Vietnam, according to People's Committee officials. Distribution centers were set up throughout the country and provinces which had reasonably good rice harvests were asked to share their bounty. Still, there is not enough to fill the needs.

Mennonite Central Committee is responding to this plea for food and clothing by sending material aid shipments. The first shipment, 290 tons of milk, clothing, bedding, soap and flour, is ready for departure from Vancouver. A second shipment of 414 tons will include beef and medicine as well as milk, clothing, soap and flour. It is scheduled to be shipped in late February. In mid-year an additional shipment is planned. The shipments are designated specifically for institutions such as hospitals and clinics in the hardest hit areas.

Pastor needed

A pastor is needed to serve in the Emmaus Mennonite Church of Wymark, Sask. Duties to commence Sept. 1, 1983.

Please contact:
Fred Heese
Box 25
Wymark, SK S0N 2Y0.

Minister needed

First Mennonite Church in Winnipeg is inviting inquiries for the position of associate minister to work as part of a team of three full-time ministers in a large bilingual congregation.

Direct inquiries to:
Waldemar Janzen
991 Fleet Ave.
Winnipeg, MB R3M 1K5
Phone 204/284-1061.

Mennonite Central Committee worker John Lamb was driving back to San Salvador, El Salvador, from distributing relief to flood victims, when he saw a soldier through the dark motioning for him to stop. He reports that he immediately stopped the pickup truck, which was also carrying Salvadoran church workers and the son of a North American missionary family. A group of about 40 soldiers started shooting at the pickup. The people in the truck ducked to the floor. When the bullets stopped, Lamb reports, "I opened the door slowly. The soldiers ordered us on the ground." Lamb was pushed by a soldier. A Salvadoran accompanying Lamb shouted, "He is an American." The commander of the group ordered Lamb to his feet, visibly upset. They were questioned over two hours, then released. The interrogators tried to establish a cause for the incident, but everyone had the proper identification and nothing illegal was being transported. What was unusual in the incident was that no one was killed and that North Americans were involved.

John Lamb talks to displaced persons in a camp near San Salvador.

Commissioned works for Bethlehem '83 celebrate history, unity

Newton, Kan. — According to the two composers preparing special commissioned works for Bethlehem '83, this summer's international, inter-Mennonite gathering, all the pieces to the artistic puzzle are falling into place and both productions should be ready for their August premieres.

Harold Moyer, professor of music at Bethel College in North Newton, Kan., and Esther Wiebe, music professor on sabbatical from Canadian Mennonite Bible College in Winnipeg, were commissioned by the convention's planning committee to create a musical drama and a cantata, respectively. The compositions will help celebrate the 300th anniversary of Mennonites in North America and unity of peoplehood between the Mennonite Church and the General Conference Mennonite Church.

Moyer's musical drama, titled "The Plow and the Sword," reflects the experience of Mennonites in eastern Pennsylvania during the American Revolutionary War, when Continental soldiers crisscrossed and camped on the farms of colonial Mennonites. As a result those early settlers came face to face with issues such as service in the militia, the payment of war taxes, their responses to pillaging by soldiers and care for the wounded.

"The primary source material for the piece was *'Twas Seeding Time* by John Ruth, with whom I worked in close consultation," said Moyer. A group of central Kansas Mennonites, under the direction of Bethel College's Arlo Kasper, will begin rehearsing the production in spring.

Although Moyer provided the script and music for the 30-minute drama, some lyrics were written by Elaine Rich of Bluffton, Ohio, while Joanna Andres of North Newton provided several *Ausbund* translations.

Esther Wiebe's dramatic cantata, tentatively titled "That They May Be One," is scheduled to be part of the closing celebration of the convention on Sunday morning, Aug. 7.

Urie Bender of Waterloo, Ont., wrote the script for the cantata, which focuses on the theme of unity. It will be performed by a community choir from the Lancaster, Pa., area under the direction of Hiram Hershey. Hershey hopes to begin rehearsals near the first of March. The soloists for the Aug. 7 performance will come from the Winnipeg area. The two groups will prepare separately, with final rehearsals scheduled for Lehigh University during the week of the conference.

Bender has listed Psalm 133:1 as a footnote to the title of the dramatic cantata: "Behold how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell in unity!" *Larry Cornies*

Beware of flaw in registration form

Newton, Kan. — Individuals using the widely circulated registration form for Bethlehem '83 should take note of a misprint in the detachable section to be mailed to the conference's Lombard, Ill., offices.

The form indicates that three meals will be available on Sunday, Aug. 7. However, the convention is scheduled to conclude at noon on that day, and the last meal served will be Sunday lunch. The Sunday supper will not be available and should not be figured into the remittance for meals.

Meanwhile, registrations for Bethlehem '83 have begun to arrive at the Lombard offices. For various reasons, including the time needed to set up the computer program, responses by the registrations office will not be sent until about April 1. However, registrations will be held in the order they are received and requests for information will be answered.

THE
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Librarian/bookstore manager

Swift Current Bible School is now receiving applications for the position of librarian/bookstore manager. This is a one-year position for the 1983-84 school year. The applicant must have experience in library work. Bookstore duties will include the ordering and receiving of stock, keeping the financial records and supervision.

Please send inquiries to:
David Ortis, principal
Box 1268
Swift Current, SK S9H 3X4.

Senior pastor needed

Olivet Mennonite Church, 45 miles east of Vancouver in the Fraser Valley, is seeking a senior pastor. Duties can begin in 1983 or sometime in 1984.

Membership is 317, with an average worship attendance of about 400. The recently renovated sanctuary can seat over 600 people.

Current staff consists of an associate pastor, administrative secretary and part-time minister of music.

The person enquiring should have experience in overseeing a fairly large, growing congregation, be gifted in preaching and pastoral leadership, be supportive of conference and MCC endeavors, relate easily to board, committee and lay workers and be growth-oriented.

A competitive salary and benefits package is provided.

Enquiries should be directed to:
Walter Paetkau, chairman
Olivet Mennonite Church
2630 Langdon St.
Clearbrook, BC V2T 3L2
Phone 604/859-5192 (home);
859-7681 (office).

THE MIDDLE EAST

May 7-28, 1983

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For more information, contact:
John Schroeder
Assiniboine Travel Service
219-818 Portage Ave.
Winnipeg, MB R3G 0N4
Phone 204/775-0271.

A letter of thanks to General Conference churches

Dear co-workers in Christ:

No, we did not reach our goal for 1982. In fact, we received only 92.7 percent of our budget. However, considering the economic conditions in Canada and the United States, we had a good year. In fact, we received $171,700 more in 1982 than in 1981. So we thank you, the faithful supporters in the congregations, for your generous contributions.

It was difficult for commissions to hold expenditures to under 94 percent of budget in 1982, but to do so again in 1983 will be very painful, if possible at all. Therefore, we need at least a 7.9 percent increase in giving for 1983 over 1982. The General Board will establish the 1983 budget during the first weekend in March. The economic prospects for 1983 are uncertain but we have confidence in our God and in our people.

Please join us in praying for the work of the General Conference and especially for the annual meeting of the Council of Commissions, March 4-8, and the Triennial Sessions, Aug. 1-7.

Grace and peace be with you,

Vern Preheim
General Secretary

Ted Stuckey
Business Manager

ADD A TOUR TO MENNONITE WORLD CONFERENCE

For a little extra, your trip to Mennonite World Conference can include an Anabaptist/Mennonite tour to the places where historic events happened. See Menno Simons' country, castle dungeons, martyr sites, Cave of the Anabaptists, Zurich, Bern, Munster, and more.

Mennonite World Conference, Strasbourg, France, will be held July 24 - 29, 1984. Choose a tour before or after conference. We can make your conference lodging and registration arrangements.

TOUR DATES:	*LEADERS*
84A, July 4-23 (20 days, from N.Y.C.)	Jan Gleysteen Leon Stauffer
84B, July 6-23, with Oberammergau (18 days, from N.Y.C.)	Wilmer Martin John Ruth
84C, July 7-23 (17 days, from N.Y.C.)	Arnold Cressman David Hostetler
84D, July 30-August 14 with Oberammergau (16 days, from Chicago)	Cal Redekop Virgil Regehr
84E, July 30-August 14, economy tour, youth hostels (16 days, from N.Y.C.)	Alice Roth Willard Roth
Israel 84, July 30-August 11, Israel and Middle East (13 days, from N.Y.C.)	Jan Gleysteen John Lederach Naomi Lederach

Write for information

TOUR-MAGINATION

1210 Loucks Ave.
Scottdale, PA. 15683
(412) 887-6639

131 Erb Street W.
Waterloo, Ont. N2L 1T7
(519) 886-3570

RECORD

CALENDAR

March 4-8 — Council of Commissions, Newton, Kan.

Canada

Feb. 3-5 — CMC Council of Boards, Winnipeg

Feb. 11-13 — Conference of Mennonites in British Columbia, Clearbrook

Feb. 18-19 — Conference of Mennonites in Manitoba, Winnipeg

Feb. 18-20 — Conference of United Mennonite Churches of Ontario, Virgil

Feb. 25-26 — Conference of Mennonites in Saskatchewan, Swift Current

March 4-6 — Mennonite Marriage Encounter, Niagara Falls, Ont.

March 11-12 — Conference of Mennonites in Alberta, Calgary

Central

April 7-10 — Central District Conference, Pandora, Ohio

Western

Feb. 25-27 — Mennonite Marriage Encounter, Concordia, Kan.

March 21-25 — Project: Teach, North Newton, Kan.

WORKERS

Marian Claassen Franz has been named the new executive director of the National Council for a World Peace Tax Fund. She will seek support for the legislation from regional, church, civil liberties and peace groups, as well as in the Congress.

Bert Lobe, Mennonite Central Committee secretary for Asia, was appointed director of the China Educational Exchange in its meeting Dec. 1. He succeeds Atlee Beechy.

Eric Raber, First Church, Sugarcreek, Ohio, began a one-year MVS term with Hope Community Services in Markham, Ill., Oct. 12. A 1980 graduate of Bluffton (Ohio) College with a bachelor's degree in psychology and religion, he is the son of Ernest and Mary Raber of Sugarcreek.

Harold Schilk, Toronto United Mennonite Church, is serving with MCC in Waterloo County, Ont., as a coordinator of Volunteer Prison Ministries. He has a bachelor's degree in religious studies from the University of Waterloo, Ont., and a bachelor's degree in theology from Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg. His parents are Robert and Johanne Schilk of Scarborough, Ont.

Raber

Schilk

Warner

White

Sprunger

Unruh

Wiebe

Wright

Veres

Walker

Joel Sprunger, Hereford Church, Bally, Pa., began a one-year MVS term Oct. 1 as a home repair worker in Portland, Ore. His parents are Charles and Geraldine Sprunger of Trappe, Pa.

Mark Unruh, New Hopedale Church, Meno, Okla., began a one-year MVS term Oct. 6 as alternative services assistant supervisor with Brothers Redevelopment in Denver. A 1982 graduate of Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., with a bachelor's degree in history and philosophy, he is the son of Dwight and Luella Unruh of Enid, Okla.

Elaine Veres, Alliance Church, Ellwood City, Pa., began a one-year MVS term Aug. 20 as a child-care worker in Beatrice, Neb. A 1982 graduate of Clarion (Pa.) State College with a bachelor's degree in elementary education and early childhood education, she is the daughter of Edward and Mary Veres of Ellwood City.

Wendy Walker, Homer (Alaska) United Methodist Church, began a one-year MVS term Sept. 13 as a home care/home repair worker in Portland, Ore. A 1982 graduate of Lewis and Clark College, Portland, with a bachelor's degree in art, she is the daughter of Darrell and Rieta Walker of Homer.

Phil Warner, United Presbyterian Church, Sterling, Kan., began a one-year MVS term as a music therapy worker Aug. 25 in St. Louis. A 1982 graduate of Tabor College, Hillsboro, Kan., with a bachelor's degree in music education, he is the son of Jean Warner of Hutchinson, Kan.

Donald White, Vest Mill Mennonite Church, Winston-Salem, N.C., began a two-year MVS term Sept. 1 as a day-care worker in Hutchinson, Kan. His parents are Richard and Joan White of High Point, N.C.

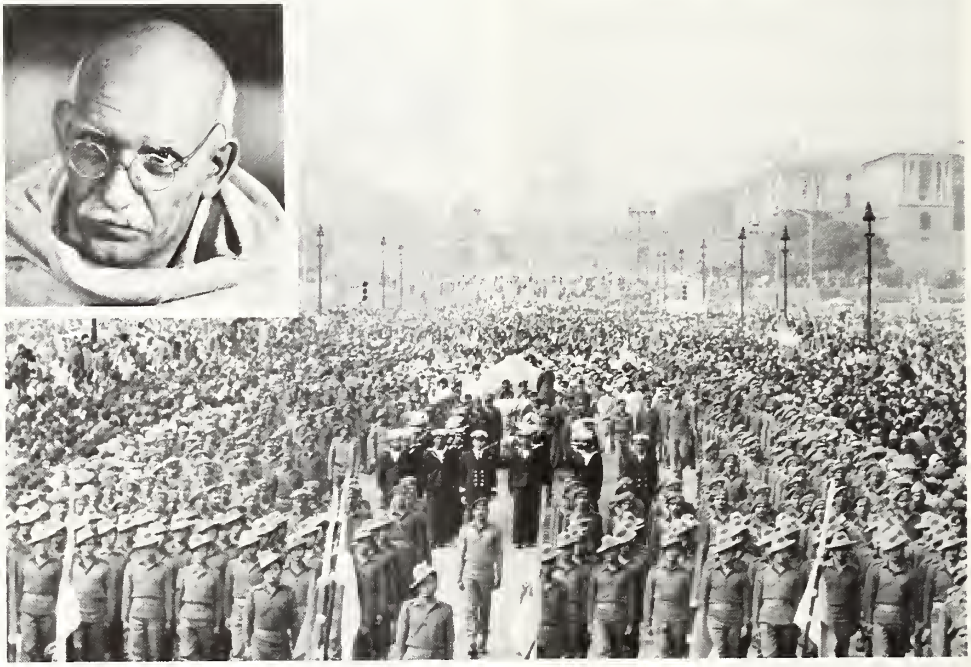
Monica Wiebe, Springstein (Man.) Church, is beginning two years of service with MCC in Belle Glade, Fla. She will be a nutritionist and work with Haitian entrants. She has a bachelor's degree in home economics and food and nutrition from the University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, and a bachelor's degree in education from the University of Toronto. Her parents are Jake and Helga Wiebe of Springstein.

William Wright, Toronto United Mennonite Church, is beginning two years of service with MCC in Toronto, working with Man to Man/Woman to Woman, a prison visitation program in which Christian volunteers meet inmates on a one-to-one basis. He studied social work at Ryerson Polytechnical Institute in Toronto. His parents are A. H. and A. J. Wright of Woodstock, Ont.

Gandhi: It is possible to live in peace

Gandhi, *produced and directed by Richard Attenborough, written by John Briley.*

Reviewed by Barth Hague, director of Faith and Life Radio and Television, Box 370, Elkhart, IN 46515



The largest cast of extras in movie history — 300,000 — are used in this scene of the Mahatma's funeral procession. Inset: Ben Kingsley as Gandhi

On rare occasions a motion picture comes along which reinforces the value of the film medium. Billed by Columbia Pictures as "a world event," *Gandhi* is such a rare film. Despite its gigantic production budget and its cinematic immensity, *Gandhi* is a work of art.

The film's genius is in the main character's portrayal. Ben Kingsley, who makes his film debut in the role of the Mahatma, is superb not only in his physical resemblance to Gandhi, but in his emotional embodiment of this man who "changed the world forever." His is a rich, powerful performance.

Gandhi is the culmination of a 20-year dream for producer/director Richard Attenborough. It's a historical film which describes Gandhi's life and spiritual development from his early days as a young lawyer in South Africa to his assassination in 1948. Although the context is Hinduism, the message of justice and peace which flows through the film is clearly Christian. Attenborough allows Mohandas Gandhi's understanding of the way of Jesus Christ to be unapologetically described in the film.

Purists will appreciate *Gandhi's* technical mastery. The film uses striking visual techniques which parallel other big-budget productions, particularly *On Golden Pond*. But even with an all-time record cast of extras numbering 300,000, *Gandhi* avoids the glitter so prevalent in Hollywood productions.

Filmed on location in India and Great Britain, the film includes exacting recreations of Gandhi's first ashram and his gigantic funeral procession along the Pajpath in Delhi. The production design staff headed by Stuart Craig seems to have been infatuated with a desire for historical accuracy.

One often overlooked strength of this film is its music, composed by Ravi Shankar. The entire score possesses an Indian flavor and is at its best during the ending credits.

Gandhi is not without a few weak spots, however. The worst part of the film is Candice Bergen. Although she gets second billing, her performance as reporter Margaret Bourke-White at the end of the film is dismal. She was obviously cast in order to lend a big name to be included with Martin Sheen, John Mills, Trevor Howard, John Gielgud and Edward Fox.

It's advisable to read an account of Gandhi's life before seeing the film, since several characters are introduced without sufficient background. Newcomers will enjoy it, but will miss several historical subtleties.

For Christians in North America the exciting thing about *Gandhi* is its solid statement on peace and non-resistance. Unfortunately, the right-wing Christian movement will not likely give the film the high esteem it gave *Chariots of Fire*, since *Gandhi* is neither pro-competition nor self-serving. Yet in comparison, *Gandhi* makes *Chariots* look like a rough draft by a group of neophyte historians.

Gandhi is highly recommended for Christians and peace-lovers of all persuasions. But that is not to say that *Gandhi* is a peaceful film. The powerful message of peace and justice is communicated only in the context of violence and injustice which existed in South Africa near the turn of the century and in British-ruled India in the early 1900s It includes a moderately graphic portrayal of Gandhi's assassination as well as scenes of massacres and warfare. Yet out of the violence rises a Christ-centered message of peace in the life of Mahatma Gandhi. Without the context of violence and injustice, the film would be trivial.

Unlike *E. T.*, *Raiders of the Lost Ark* and other popular but banal films, *Gandhi* will not be a box office smash. Although it has a good chance of winning best picture and best actor awards in 1983, the theme is too complex and the length too excessive — over three hours — to allow it to become a record-breaking, marketplace success.

Nevertheless, *Gandhi* is a film worth seeing, even for those who seldom visit a motion picture theater. It's a rare opportunity to spend $4 for an experience worth much more. Referring to the film in which he starred, Ben Kingsley said, "I suspect it will have an extraordinary effect on an enormous number of people." I pray he's right.

LETTERS

Thanks again

I read *The Mennonite* eagerly because from my point of view it is the best church paper. I see many others but none is as fully "alive" as *The Mennonite. Ray Hilty, Route 1, Box 255, Ingleside, TX 78362*

Nov. 18

Compliments welcome

The Mennonite is first-rate — good, sound Anabaptist theology, inspirational and well-written — the best Mennonite organ I've met. Keep it up. *Twila Miller, 1010 Main St., Akron, PA 17501*

Dec. 2

What is wholistic?

Carl H. Epp's letter (Dec. 7 issue) didn't seem "wholistic." Arguing a negative view of all homosexuality from conditions in one part of the gay population is like condemning all heterosexuality on the basis of conditions prevalent in singles bars. Doctors will identify as "homosexual" only those patients who so identify themselves. Since that revelation is likely to be made only if there is a problem related to sexuality, doctors are likely unaware of the well-adjusted, generally healthy gay patients who see them for a cold or flu. Few doctors would hazard an evaluation of the heterosexual population based on those patients who saw them for heterosexually transmitted venereal disease.

Epp's letter is an example of blaming the victim. Society attempts to regulate and support healthy heterosexual relationships with customs, rules and social structures such as marriage. On the other hand, heterosexual society, by censure, punishment and disapproval, has pushed homosexual-oriented persons toward a larger (though by no means exclusive) reliance on transient and serial relationships which are more susceptible to the spread of disease and to unhealthy emotional conditions. Then the dominant society levels charges of "promiscuity" and "aberrancy" at gay society. (This is like white people blaming black people for the rundown condition of the ghettos white people force black people to live in.)

A wholistic view encompasses all the relevant data. Heterosexual people who know healthy, well-adjusted gay and lesbian people know that homosexuality is compatible with wholeness just as heterosexuality is. In fact, gay and lesbian people who survive the antipathy and bigotry of the dominant population can be *models* of successful coping with hostile social environments. This is one reason heterosexual Christians need their gay brothers and lesbian sisters in the church.

P.S. Thanks for the Dec. 7 editorial, which beckoned me toward God's love in a heart-warming way that keeps coming back to mind. It was the first influence to *joyfully* anticipate Christmas that I've had this year. *John Linscheid, 924 Louisiana #2, Lawrence, KS 66044*

Dec. 13

Government authority

The king of Israel, Saul (1 Samuel 16:14, "the spirit of the Lord departed from Saul") separated himself from God's Spirit. From then on, with the exception of David's reign, the history of the monarchy of Israel is a sorry tale of almost unbroken kingly disobedience to the will of God. The human king had power and authority only as he was faithful to the divine will and worked toward the realization of the kingdom of God. Jesus called Herod "that fox" (Luke 13:32) and does not hesitate to criticize existing authorities. Peter says we must obey God rather than man (Acts 5:29).

"The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And the Lord was sorry that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him to his heart. So the Lord said, 'I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the earth, man and beast and creeping things and the birds of the air. For I am sorry that I have made them' " (Genesis 6:5-7).

God was not in favor of man's authority. Will the Lord be sorry for the way we on earth behave and destroy us through our own devices — war? *E. R. Moser, Route 2, Road 2, 17849, Bluffton, OH 45817*

Dec. 13

Serving in Kenya

Susan Oppenheimer and I would value your prayers as we work together in Nakuru. Nakuru is located 100 miles west of the capital of Kenya (Nairobi).

Our interest in being here is to share Jesus Christ with the Asians of the community. We have been asked to come here to serve, and we are thankful for this opportunity. We do have a few believers in the city that need to be encouraged and drawn together, but a big part of our work will be in the developing of new contacts and witnessing for Christ. We can't open Bible clubs until January when the new school year begins, but we have done visitation and invited some people for tea and meals.

Presently I am in Mombasa for a field council meeting but have been visiting some of my old friends here and introducing them to the Dobras, who are the only ones working with the Hindus now. Merle and Carol Ediger are in a one-year language program and will not be available for the work for at least nine months. The Dobras and I have had many happy years of working together and I value their friendship, wisdom and help very much. In these difficult days, we must be united so that much might be accomplished for the Lord. *Martha Ratzlaff, Box 2159, Nakuru, Kenya*

Dec. 13

We like Colombia

We are Americans who have made our home in Latin America for seven years. Lately we are seeing much distorted news coming out of the United States about the Americans and would like to set the record straight for *The Mennonite* readers.

When we first moved to Costa Rica — bag, baggage, grandmother, teenagers and pets — we spoke no Spanish and knew little about the country. But soon our rural neighbors accepted us and graciously taught us their language, culture and how a city-bred family could enjoy ranch life in a foreign land.

My husband's love for the sea prompted a further move two years ago to Colombia's Caribbean coast.

Imagine green palms waving in gentle ocean breezes, blue sea and sky, pounding surf and golden sand and, towering 19,000 feet over all and snow-capped the year round, majestic Mount Colombus. We feel we have much . . . incomparable beauty, fine neighbors, perfect climate, a stable, democratic government and a satisfyingly low cost of living.

If you are interested in the future of the Americas, and the Birds, write to *Juanita Bird, Box 5222, Santa Marta, Colombia*

Dec. 13

Infant formulas

For over five years baby formula manufacturers have been under fire for their aggressive marketing practices, especially in underdeveloped countries. Mothers, led to believe that breast feeding is inadequate, buy baby formula but in many cases are unable to properly sterilize the bottle or, being poor, attempt to make the powder go further by diluting it with water. As a result the child suffers from infection or malnutrition during the crucial first year of development. These problems are dramatically illustrated in *The Formula Factor*, a film available from the National Film Board (Canada).

As the leading distributor of baby formula in the Third World, Nestle has received the brunt of the criticism with the hope that once Nestle improves its marketing practices the other companies will follow suit. It should be mentioned that, although Nestle has agreed to abide by the World Health Organization (WHO) code for the marketing of baby formula, there appear to be serious discrepancies between the intent of the code and Nestle's interpretation of it. We urge you to join the Nestle boycott and continue to boycott Nestle products until Nestle has demonstrated that it is abiding by the WHO code. For a list of Nestle products and more detailed information on this problem please write to: Nestle Boycott, The United Church of Canada, 85 St. Clair Ave. E., Toronto, ON M4T 1M8. *Jeff Brubacher, Mennonite Fellowship of Montreal, 120 est avenue Duluth, Montreal, PQ H2W 1H1*

Dec. 14

Manger no scandal

"The Sign of the Manger" (Dec. 7 issue) by Marion Deckert made me wonder if he had ever been in a barn? Didn't Joseph and Mary have the sense to lay the Christ child in clean straw? Didn't a bright star shine for the holy babe?

You must have a total misunderstanding of how pleasant it is to enter a "kept" barn, surrounded by peaceful, contented animals.

During the care of a sick horse, my daughter slept peacefully in a manger on a cold night. It was a pretty picture . . . no scandal.

I'm a realistic farmer. I feel the manger is a tribute to the birth of Jesus. The cozy warmth of a stable, humble animals at peace, an atmosphere full of wonder and contentment, and stars shining bright are far superior to the crowded inn.

I can see people at the inn noisily milling about, complaining of taxes, in a hurry to get the ordeal over and return home.

God's Son is a gift of peace and rest. Isn't this the environment he deserved at birth?

Christ born in a stable is perfect for the Prince of Peace.

His birth is not a scandal, contrary to my thinking or something I want to disguise. I am proud of his birth. It means a lot to me. I accept the event with simplicity. Do we always have to get so philosophical?

My picture of the holy birth is beautiful and positive. Don't color it ugly and negative. *Amy Jo Wechter, Route 3, Ligonier, IN 46767*

Dec. 20

Wants to know source

In your Dec. 21 issue was an article about R. J. Reynolds/Del Monte/ Kentucky Fried Chicken. I would like to know where you got this information. I buy all Del Monte canned goods that I need. *Name withheld*

Dec. 26

Editorial assistant's note: It's from the National Federation of Decency, Box 1398, Tupelo, MS 38801.

Pastor salaries

Jim Rupp's letter (Dec. 21 issue) contains a number of misconceptions about pastors and salaries which I feel should be answered. He emphasizes many of the "hidden benefits" in a pastor's salary such as travel expenses, vacation time, housing and what he terms "numerous tax writeoffs and shelters." He fails to mention the many hidden expenses of the pastor's job which offset many or all of the benefits which he lists.

Pastors pay significantly higher rates in social security taxes, and they pay the full amount of their obligation because they are self-employed. For pastors it is difficult or impossible to choose not to attend district conferences or General Conference sessions. Inflation has made travel expensive enough so that a triennial trek to the General Conference sessions can wreak havoc in the family budget. Most churches do not adjust the pastor's travel budget every third year to reflect these needs. Pastor families do a good bit of hosting in the home for visiting speakers, traveling families, not to mention groups from the congregation which are entertained. Pastors are required to keep a growing personal library and subscribe to papers and journals for the purpose of keeping current. They must also attend workshops and seminars not just for personal growth but because the programs of the church require them to attend. These are a few of the hidden costs of the job.

Moreover, many of the discounts we took for granted in the past are no longer available because society expects the church to pay its professionals like any other institution does. A discount at the clothing store or the airline company is a thing of the past, and rightly so.

There are some decidedly advantageous ways of reporting income for tax purposes, which only pastors enjoy. This may be viewed as an unfair advantage, or it may be viewed as an equalizer since there are few professions or businesses which do not enjoy some type of write-offs.

While I do not consider myself one of the underpaid pastors in our churches, I know that there is a lot of anguish among my colleagues who are victims of the misconceptions expressed in Rupp's letter. *Melvin D. Schmidt, 655 S. Lorraine, Wichita, KS 67211*

Dec. 30

Wish we could pay more

I am concerned about Jim Rupp's view ("Pastors and Salaries") in the Dec. 21 issue.

As a past treasurer of an Eastern District church and a chairman of the board of deacons and bookkeeper of a New Testament Baptist church, as a former State Employment Commission tax representative who also is an income tax practitioner, as a student who studied wage compensation en route to a master's degree in public administration, I feel qualified to add my comments.

The laborer indeed is worthy of his hire. That includes those whom God has called to minister to the needs of his flock.

In rebuttal to Mr. Rupp, the only tax

advantage with which I am familiar that is available to the pastor and not to the general public is that of counting home expenses as a non-taxable item. Mitigating even that advantage, which would not apply to every minister, is the fact that the pastor is taxed at self-employment rates versus those of an employee on Social Security contributions.

Having taught in Christian schools, I have known many pastors. From my experience, most of them would stay on if their salaries were cut. They would get a part-time job, if they thought it would be what the Lord wanted. However, a pastor's duties, if they are rightly done, necessitate a commitment to the church so that few employers would be willing to hire a person under those conditions.

Then why is there not enough money to pay the pastor? Is the church practicing tithing? Is the church giving more than 10 percent of their salaries? If the church members are participating in God's plan of finance, and the money is not there, that is one thing. However, if the church members are not practicing tithing, the lack of money to properly sustain a pastor is not because the pastor is robbing God or the church. It is not his compensation that is causing the problem for the church; rather, it is the disobedience of church members.

As for the other quibbles, most enlightened companies in this day and age have medical plans, tuition reimbursement, retirement plans and vacations. I feel the church should set the example, not try and get away as cheaply as they can.

If Mr. Rupp is disgruntled, as the letter sounds, because his pastor is getting some benefits that he is not, then perhaps Mr. Rupp needs to visit his local state employment service to seek another job.

Kraft writes in his *Director of Christian Education* that the pastor should be paid as much as the local superintendent of schools. In my hometown, that would be more than $60,000. I feel Kraft is too high. My pastor is paid $22,000 a year, approximately the salary of a teacher with comparable experience. He received a 5 percent increase this year, less than the cost of living because he did not want to be a burden. With 10 years of pastoral experience, is he overpaid? No. I wish we could have paid him more. *John Transue, 1900 Tieback Trail, Virginia Beach, VA 23464* Jan. 4

Some hopes for *The Mennonite*

I write on Christmas Day, and one word which commands our attention is *peace.* We Mennonites are a peace church, and I like to think that we are concerned about peace between a person and God, peace with oneself, with one's fellow human beings and with the world.

Lately *The Mennonite* has given good coverage to such peace issues as nuclear war and national injustices, registration and war taxes, many in countries other than our own. Here are some other peace issues which I hope will get more coverage in the coming year.

The abuse of alcohol and other drugs. Actually, alcoholism is the issue that prompted this letter. During the past year we moved into a community where this is the number one problem. Deaths from accidents, cirrhosis, malnutrition, fetal alcohol syndrome causing mental retardation, traffic accidents, broken homes; one could go on and on. Cigarette smoking is causally related to 300,000 deaths a year in the United States alone. My own acquaintance with drug-related problems other than these is minimal, but it appears that their use in public schools is epidemic — to say nothing of the crime involved.

Abortion-infanticide and euthanasia. We humans now have the power to in some sense play God, to decide who lives and who dies. How do we use this power in a Christian manner? These issues should involve more than just the medical community.

Greed. The Bible links greed with idolatry, but we have spiffed it up and called it by other names: ambition or at the worst materialism. It's a sin which affects the rich, the poor and perhaps the middle class more than either. Let's not blame the rich or affluent simply because they have what we want, let's get to the root — human selfishness — which can be changed only by Christ's work in the heart.

Lust. Perverted love is purveyed to us by the media — brotherly-sisterly love perverted to homosexuality, love of children to sexual molestation, love of spouse to casual liaisons. Where is the sound biblical teaching on sex which our young people so sorely need?

I know we don't all agree about these issues. Neither do we all agree about nuclear war, draft registration or war taxes. But that should not be reason to be silent or to judge one another. Can we deal with these issues and maybe find a core of agreement in the spirit of Ephesians 4:2, 3: "Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace" (NIV)? *Elvina N. Martens, M.D., Box 116, Hammon, OK 73650* Jan. 4

Editor's note: Yours comes as a helpful affirmation in our projections for 1983. We are soliciting feature articles on several of the topics you name. Watch for them soon.

In our overall planning for 1983 we felt led to write on such basic spiritual qualities as prayer, personal new life in Christ, human life as God's gift, marriage reconciliation, discipleship. Other major focuses will be on alcohol, stewardship and education. Of course, we plan to continue regular Bible studies, personal sharing, stories on local congregation efforts/celebrations and holding before us a global awareness.

'68 Mustang did it

Your '68 Mustang editorial (Jan. 4 issue) did it. I've been meaning to write in response to *The Mennonite* editorials, especially those relating to your late son. Your exposing of your soul helped me.

The "used car dealer" editorial is a classic. *J. O. Schrag, 2312 Berry Ave., North Newton, KS 67117* Jan. 10

Appreciates *The Mennonite*

I express my continued appreciation for what you are doing in *The Mennonite.* I think that you have made tremendous improvements and I want to thank you for that. Improvements in terms of format, which I appreciate very much, as well as the content of *The Mennonite.* I would like to see more devotional and biblical articles in *The Mennonite.* I appreciate your thrusts in the editorials, which I think are on the ball. *Kenneth G. Bauman, Box 111, Berne, IN 46711* Jan. 11

About letters: *To encourage readers to express themselves on a variety of issues, we try to use all letters submitted for publication. Longer letters will be shortened. Unsigned correspondence will not be published, although we may withhold names for valid reasons in special situations.* Editor

Jesus, cockroaches and souls

Ronald L. Classen

The challenge. Blood trickled out of both nostrils and down the sides of his mouth.

He was a Native American who'd just been smashed on the bridge of the nose by an angry man whom he'd threatened to cut with a knife.

"Cut me?" the man had screamed, "ain't nobody going to cut me. You __________!"

I could tell the man was scared and that this tall, lean, unshaven man could injure or kill in his current state of agitation.

"Please put the fork down," I said. Although I was the first employee of the Lutheran Compass Center on the scene of this altercation, I didn't know what to do.

I knew if I jumped between the two, I would likely be injured. I thought my presence would somehow quiet the situation. It didn't.

It was hard to tell whether the blow or booze staggered the Indian, but he struggled vainly to get out of his chair. The other man was preparing to thrust the fork when another employee of the center stepped between them.

"Sit down right now!" he hollered at the man so loudly it shook the window panes. "And you," his attention now directed at the Indian, "you get up and leave. You've been drinking and you shouldn't be in here!"

With that he grabbed the Indian and escorted him out the door. I stood by and watched, feeling guilty about my inactivity.

Other workers at the center said it was all right to react the way I did, but I still felt like a coward. My inactivity forced someone else to risk harm in a situation I should have been able to handle.

It bothered me the rest of the day. But as I sat down at the supper table and was about to pray, I looked at the other five MVS workers seated at the table with me and I felt good again. Life meant so much more to me than it had just two years ago.

I had been comfortable but bored. Two years ago "Mennonite" to me meant people garbed in black using buggies to bring dry goods to their farms.

I was a Federal Office of Personnel Management employee then, spending most of my working day reading federal regulations and reviewing applications of people wishing to work for Uncle Sam. It was boring but it paid well and had good benefits.

I had career tenure and was in a position to be financially secure for the rest of my life.

In the spring of 1981, my swimming instructor asked me to go with him to the South Seattle Mennonite Church. It wasn't long before I began attending every week and thought about joining MVS.

Living simply and non-violently made sense to me. So did serving others and giving to those in need. I wondered how I could continue to make so much more money than I needed when so many people had little or nothing?

What kept me working for the U.S. government until May of 1982 was not the work, but the money and "security."

Church is helping me change. People at the church helped me change. I saw that most lived their beliefs. Many were working at missions, mental health centers or for peace groups. Many were former MVS or MCC volunteers.

I knew I could not in good conscience associate with these people and keep my federal job. In them I found the support I needed to join MVS and begin work at the Lutheran Compass Center, a full-service center for alcoholics and street people.

Now, instead of staring at reams of regulations and paper, I stare at the faces of poverty. I see the terror, the frustration and the helplessness caused by no money, no food, no shelter and few clothes. I see what alcohol can do to a person, how it scars the mind and the body.

Eyes which can no longer see due to cataracts caused by booze. Speech permanently slurred. Fingers, hands, arms and legs twisted and gnarled after frequent collisions with pavement, clubs and knives. Faces horribly disfigured by jackroller fists and feet.

I hear the raspy breathing, the gravel voices. I smell the urine, the feces, the body odor, the whiskey and wine. I stamp on the roaches and see the rat droppings.

It's not easy. Sometimes I want to walk away and never come back, to give some money to help but personally stay away. Sometimes I think it would be smartest to go back to my comfortable, middle-class life and invest my money for a nice retirement, go to parties and create my own safe world again.

Life would be so simple. I wouldn't have all this stress. I could get a color TV and drive a sports car. I could get a

chuck neufeld
ropes and yoke-bars

Chuck Neufeld RECORDS

"Ropes & Yoke-bars (1980) is a brilliant recording in the American folk music tradition; thus it is music for the underdogs." Dan Born/*With*

"One cannot resist being 'infected' by the joy and hope of the two musicians." Beat Rüegger, Basel/Switzerland

"This is a record I turn to when I am beset by doubt and discouragement. I know music is good music when it brings tears to my eyes." Jim Juhnke/North Newton, Kan.

"On the other hand . . . (1982) the lyrics show a strongly biblical approach to social issues. They ring with hope, the kind of hope that knows what it's up against in today's world." Jean Garvin/*The Mennonite*

"The emotion with which Chuck sings reveals tenderness, love, hope, concern and anger." Jude Krehbiel

All songs (except Hard Times/Stephen Foster) by Chuck Neufeld
Chuck Neufeld: Voice, guitar, harmonica and dulcimer
Duane Gundy: Backup voice, guitar, bass and mandolin

Albums: $6.99 & $1.00 postage and handling
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Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.

local

dog and a cat and live in a two-story house with a nice lawn and garden, raise a family and die a good Christian.

I still may do that, but for now I need these people. They are starving and lonely. Many of them are drunk, and all of them are in need. They are the casualties of a society where people can get lost in the shuffle. They are the canners, the cutters, the unprime. I can't help but feel God wants me to help, to see, to experience, to know what it's like.

Saving souls. One day, after an unpleasant scene with a person who came into the center drunk, a visitor asked the counselor I work with how many souls he'd saved.

The counselor said, "I'm trying to save this man's life, then I'll work on saving his soul. Would you like to help? I think if Jesus were alive, he'd be down here with his sleeves rolled up getting bugs on himself with the rest of us. What do you think?"

The man looked away and left the room without another word.

As I sat thinking about what had just transpired I saw the center pastor, who'd heard the exchange, turn to the counselor and say, "I love it when you talk that way."

At that instant I realized that I did too and that God has me in the right place.

global

Genocide in God's name?

Mary Solberg

The reality of the violent drama unfolding in Central America is clear even in Mexico City. The person with whom we stayed represents a Salvadoran relief agency that cannot work openly in El Salvador for fear of reprisals against their staff by the Salvadoran government security forces.

Several Guatemalan relief agencies are also based in Mexico City. They cannot work within their own country either, where they are viewed as subversives by the government because of their work to help Guatemala's Indians (half of the country's total population of 7.2 million) survive escalating violence, massacres and government repression. Church officials with whom we spoke both inside and outside Guatemala told us that possibly as many as a million people are displaced within Guatemala.

More than 30,000 Guatemalans who have fled across the border into Mexico occupy about two dozen refugee camps in the Mexican state of Chiapas. Guatemalan military operations, including incursions by army troops and paramilitary squads into Mexican territory, have terrorized and destroyed the lives of tens of thousands of Guatemalan peasants.

At one of the camps we visited in southern Mexico, we found about 300 Guatemalans living in miserable conditions. There were no tents. The refugees lived in makeshift homes with sheets of plastic stretched over pole frames. There was no running water, and virtually no medicine to treat malaria, dysentery and fevers. Mexican peasants were sharing what little food they had with the refugees.

There seemed to be thousands of little children, though there were probably only hundreds — dirty, half-dressed kids with bellies distended from malnutrition. There were beautiful Indian women, all of whom were probably 20 years younger than they looked, trying to take care of the children and the old men and women with them. We saw few men and even fewer young men.

The stories the Guatemalan refugees told us were similar from one camp to another: their village surrounded by the army, which arrived in helicopters — a way of distinguishing the army from the guerrillas — drove all the people into the church in the village center and then burned the church to the ground. Others told us of having seen brothers, sisters and children, hacked to death with machetes, beaten with sticks and rocks.

Several days later, when we arrived in Guatemala City, we were struck by the eerie, tense calm and by the sight of police armed with machine guns, standing on many corners. It seemed to us that people in the capital were living in a different world from the one inhabited by the refugees from the countryside.

Church workers told us that Guatemala's leader, Rios Montt, was beginning to make good on his promise to curb violence in the city and expose corruption among bureaucrats. Tragically, however, he was also making good on his promise to be ruthless in destroying what he perceives as a communist insurgency in Guatemala's rural areas. Rios Montt, who describes himself as a born-again Christian, believes he has a direct mandate from God to govern Guatemala. He has declared a state of siege throughout the countryside, a declaration that gives the Guatemalan army a license to kill. Church workers said violence against Guatemala's Indians amounts to genocide. "And," one said, "it is being done in the name of God."

This is part of a report made to Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service by Mary Solberg, Central American concerns program coordinator.

Rice-beans-and-on-occasion-chicken

Lynn Keenan

MVS personnel. I gladly compose this final report as exiting personnel director for Mennonite Voluntary Service — happy to interpret for the General Conference just who these beloved people are. However, while the gathering of statistics and percentages is easy, it is difficult to paint for you in words a picture of the MVS family. Often in my recollection of volunteers I am like the tongue-tied lover who can't possibly verbalize the wonder and gratitude that is evoked by the loved one. And though the analogy may sound too dramatic, I tell you that to know them is to love them madly. To love them is to catch their vision and to share their passions for justice, for peace, for life and its living. As one who almost daily thanks God for the privilege of serving with this community ("almost daily" because I confess there are days I wish the Lord would keep such vitality from me), I wish that each of you could have some direct contact with volunteers, their ministry and their love for our crazy world.

In lieu of that for most of you, here is some of the story of these friends — those you send, support and encourage.

One hundred thirty-five people (up 12 percent over last year) serve throughout Canada and the United States in 30 MVS units. Eight of those units have been born in the past year. From 17 to 75 years of age, most of the volunteers live in households (units) of three to eight people sharing resources, household responsibilities and a vision to embody the loving spirit of community (no small feat for the humble, human servants of God). Forty-seven percent come from Mennonite backgrounds — a diminishing number from last year but reflecting an increasing response by Christians from a variety of religious backgrounds. More than three-fourths of the volunteers hold at least an undergraduate degree, an increase of over 25 percent from last year. Eighteen percent are married.

In total, volunteers in 1982 provided $2,025,000 worth of services. In return they receive modest housing, rice-beans-and-on-occasion-chicken food allowances, medical coverage and small monthly personal allowances of $35 to $60 (depending on the number of years in service).

Inside MVS. What the percentages and numbers don't reflect is the heart of the individual volunteer. Impossible to enumerate are the days a volunteer comes home discouraged and weary. Imagine the energy drawn (and rarely returned) by daily work with young alcoholics — the energy and hope needed that someday, perhaps today, a boy will show even the smallest sign of self-respect, will somehow respond to the love of one of Christ's ambassadors.

Impossible to measure is the joy felt at a victory — no matter how small — glorious in the kingdom of God. Put yourself in the place of a child-care worker who every day for nearly a year has worked with an emotionally disturbed child attempting only to teach her to say her name. Now, pay special attention to your spinal cord, your funny bone, your cheek muscles and your tear ducts as you quite unexpectedly hear that child mumble, "My name is Sara." Or imagine the joy of spirit of a traveling volunteer, sharing the gospel through song and drama, at the commitment of a listener to follow Jesus Christ. Throw your arms around a new sister in the kingdom of the living God.

Sandy Wiens completes an evaluation form during an MVS orientation in August 1982. She is currently serving in Elkhart, Ind.

No scale can possibly measure the growth, the widening windows, the enveloping heart of one living among and serving a people different from themselves. Picture the enthusiastic volunteer eager to bring Christ to people of the inner city and as weeks and months go by recognizes that Jesus is there and has been there for years in the lives of the simple, spiritual poor. Now this opportunity for ministry also becomes an opportunity to receive.

No story of MVS would be complete without the gifts of laughter and of tears. Come with me to a unit of volunteers whose shared humor and bearing of burdens and souls equip them to face a chaotic world. Hearty laughter, gentle teasing and playful conversation provide the best medicine for the tedium and folly that honest service sometimes appears to be. But when souls are pushed to their painful limits, the unit can become a quiet place, a strong place. It can be a place to hold one's tears and let loose one's prayers. And while living together is hard work, it is often the place where a great deal of growth happens in the life of a volunteer. For surely iron does sharpen iron.

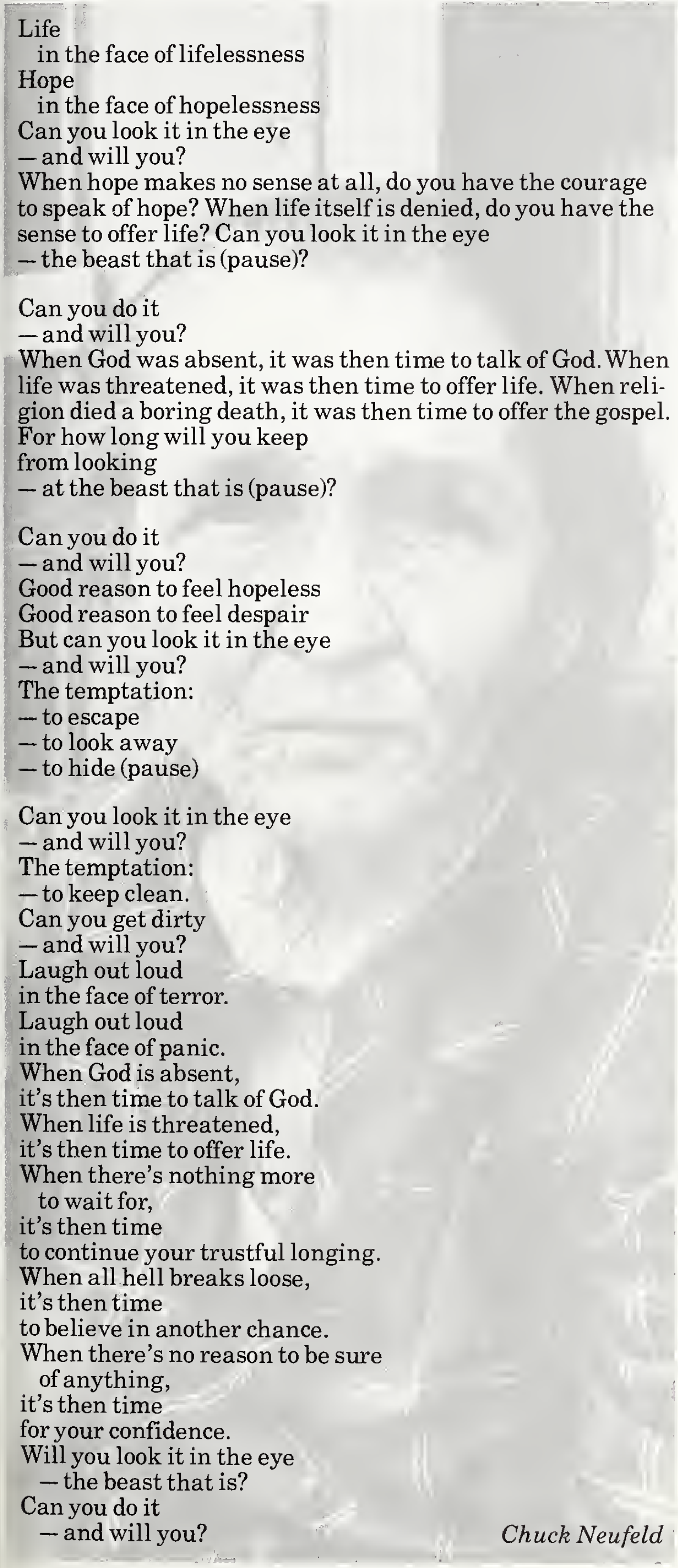
Lives are changed in VS. One cannot hope to be the same person upon leaving a term of service that one was upon entering. There are too many questions asked, too many new experiences, new people, new ideas encountered, and too many needs demanding the utilization of new gifts to allow a life to go untouched or unmoved or to keep the Spirit from creating and recreating a willing (or even a stubborn) soul. The growth and metamorphosis in a volunteer's life — whether that volunteer be 18, 32 or 53 years old — is a miracle to behold, a witness to a Creator who is alive and active, converting and redeeming today as throughout history in the lives of all the saints.

The picture of the MVS family is a living one; one to which words can simply not do justice. I invite you to know that picture. The more you know of it, the more you will taste of your own conversion and redemption. With joy and gratitude I bear witness as one who has.

Come along.

MEDITATION

Can you look it in the eye?



Life
in the face of lifelessness
Hope
in the face of hopelessness
Can you look it in the eye
— and will you?
When hope makes no sense at all, do you have the courage to speak of hope? When life itself is denied, do you have the sense to offer life? Can you look it in the eye
— the beast that is (pause)?

Can you do it
— and will you?
When God was absent, it was then time to talk of God. When life was threatened, it was then time to offer life. When religion died a boring death, it was then time to offer the gospel.
For how long will you keep
from looking
— at the beast that is (pause)?

Can you do it
— and will you?
Good reason to feel hopeless
Good reason to feel despair
But can you look it in the eye
— and will you?
The temptation:
— to escape
— to look away
— to hide (pause)

Can you look it in the eye
— and will you?
The temptation:
— to keep clean.
Can you get dirty
— and will you?
Laugh out loud
in the face of terror.
Laugh out loud
in the face of panic.
When God is absent,
it's then time to talk of God.
When life is threatened,
it's then time to offer life.
When there's nothing more
to wait for,
it's then time
to continue your trustful longing.
When all hell breaks loose,
it's then time
to believe in another chance.
When there's no reason to be sure
of anything,
it's then time
for your confidence.
Will you look it in the eye
— the beast that is?
Can you do it
— and will you?

Chuck Neufeld

CONTENTS

Mennonite Voluntary Service is more than a place for *youth* to serve. It is an opportunity for us — at all ages — to relate our witness in many common life experiences around us. Too many Christians reserve faith for Sunday, for church and for crises. Jesus came to help us all live "abundant life." What does that mean? How do we do it?

This MVS issue can help all of us to see how some are learning and have learned more about this life in the fullness of Christ. Let's learn with them.

Thanks to Chuck Neufeld, MVS office east, 3248 W. 163rd St., Markham, IL 60426, for special editorial assistance. Other MVS staff who helped are Peter J. Ediger, MVS director, 5927 Miller Ave., Arvada, CO 80004; David Orr and Lynn Keenan of the MVS office, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.

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EdiTORiAL

For God's sake and for our sakes

We've heard it often. "I'm going to serve the poor." (Implication: I'm better off than those I go to serve; maybe even that I'm a better person.) "I'm going to preach the gospel to the unsaved." (Implication: I've found the answers to the deepest quests of my soul and I'm now ready to give answers to any unfortunates who still have questions.) "I'm going into MVS to bring about justice to and among minority groups." (Implication: I know what Christian justice is and live without prejudice toward others.)

No, I'm not suggesting that *all* who serve do so without proper spiritual motives.

But yes, many believers sound considerably self-righteous when they publicly state their reasons for going into service. They sound too altruistic, too mature, too dedicated.

There is no doubt within me that Christians who volunteer part of their lives to serve — among the poor, within unjust systems, as missionaries and evangelists to sinners — have to be motivated at least in part by God's self-giving love. There is altruism, pietism and a hunger for justice and salvation. We are moved to serve "for God's sake."

But I'm equally convinced that you and I need to serve for our own sakes. Our own spiritual health and growth is at stake.

How can I grow from an infant faith toward a mature faith unless I exercise that faith in special ways? Somehow to test my faith without all the fringe benefits, bonuses, cost-of-living increases and all the insurances? Somehow to test my faith in a context where we are a minority in the midst of violence, alcoholism, marital problems, injustices and poor housing? Somehow to test my faith in a country or culture where people are into other religions or afraid of any foreigner who comes with a "tourist" faith? Yes, you and I are moved also to serve "for our own sakes."

In this mix is a third crucial ingredient — those we mean to serve. We often think of ourselves helping the institution, saving the heathen (sinners), raising up the slums. We feel that we do it for them.

Yes, there is truth in such thoughts and feelings. But not too much truth. Great evangelists confess: "I'm just a beggar who is finding some bread and hoping to have other beggars join me in finding this Bread of Life." Workers of compassion admit, "I'm learning to receive the love of Jesus and inviting others to join me so that together we can learn how to receive Jesus' love and pass it on." Honest believers affirm, "God's merciful grace is helping me gradually to cope with life's struggles, and I'm excited to encourage others to join me in seeking how to live for eternal purposes."

To serve Christ and our neighbors does require a sense of self-respect, a relationship of sins forgiven and a sense of respect for those we serve (Mark 12:28-33).

Even more basic, it requires a sense of incarnation — becoming a part of those we serve. Holy God became human Jesus. Jesus gives us his Holy Spirit. The Godhead (Trinity) is with us and in us everywhere. In so being, God shows us his love and desire for our reconciliation to our Creator. God becomes totally vulnerable in being Son and Spirit. By becoming Immanuel, he risks our personal rejection.

Surprise of surprises. When you and I finally catch God's incarnate love, we don't want to let go. Fail, yes (Peter denied Jesus three times), but in him we find meaning for here and for eternity.

Similarly, when you and I let ourselves become incarnate believers — to unsaved in India, to the poor of the urban core, to victims of oppression — they discover in us that part of them which also wants to cope and believe and hope. They become our fast friends for as long as we'll be their friends. And insofar as we are the incarnate Christ to them, they become friends of Jesus Christ.

It's not simple to serve for Jesus' sake. Neither is it easy to admit we serve for our own sake.

But only as Jesus' sake and our sake come together — wherever we serve — do we become part of reaching beyond ourselves for Jesus' sake in the lives of other persons. In this giving of self — to Jesus and to others — we grow spiritually. *Bernie Wiebe*

THE MENNONITE

OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST

98:04 FEBRUARY 15, 1983

...we
have claimed
a corner of the
kingdom for our own.

When God's Spirit moves— pack your bags!

Julie M. Trnka

The woman looking for her lost coin could not have had any more urgency than we during the summer of '81. We weren't looking for coins or even souls, but houses. And though some of the members of Faith Mennonite Church sensed a strong call from God to move into the church neighborhood in south Minneapolis, our humanness was often more dominant than our belief in God's gentle leading. On a typical Sunday afternoon the church neighborhood was regularly invaded by slow-moving cars methodically weaving up and down the streets surrounding Faith Church. A closer look would reveal rather glassy-eyed Mennonites peering intently over each steering wheel, the Sunday paper crumpled in each driver's trembling hand, and cars idling in conference at each "For Sale" sign.

What actually precipitated this rather eccentric real estate venture? For years my husband, Frank, and I had thought about moving into the city from our older, suburban home. Public transportation and location of church and friends were appealing reasons. But in the spring of '81 we had been able to comfortably refinance our home, so we seemed settled. Besides, our decision to try to live below the taxable income level (as war tax resisters) precluded (we thought) taking on any new mortgages at the current outrageous interest rates.

Then I saw the blue house on the way home from church. It was wonderful . . . hardwood floors, fenced-in yard, built-in buffet. The Swedish blue exterior with crisp, white trim appealed to my Scandinavian tastes. I was hooked. I think I must have temporarily taken on the symptoms of a drug addict needing a fix as we waited for a realtor to check out financing. The house eventually slipped through our fingers. But through this first priming of the pump, the idea of "mobilization" took root in us.

I'll never forget the night we shared with our small group from church our musings about moving. It seemed so crazy for us to be talking about relocating when this small band of faithfuls had just finished praying us through the refinancing of our old house. But as our dreams of moving into the church neighborhood unfolded, one by one group members talked of similar thinking they too had done . . . and the seed of a community move was planted.

Joan, who lived in a rental a good 45-minute drive from her demanding residency program in town, was a veteran of community life. She had known it, had grown in it and could foresee its potential here. The nature of her profession demanded skillful stewardship of a more than adequate income. So investing some of her resources into property plus the prospect of enjoying her own garden in a community setting were both parts of a journey she seemed anxious to embark upon.

Berry and Sharon had a great deal to leave behind. They had just completed a labor of love in their neat little St. Paul home — stripping and refinishing all the woodwork in the house. The neighborhood was familiar, child care close by and roots growing deep for both them and their bubbling preschool children. Yet they too were compelled by the same still, small voice . . . which, by the way, was often too small for our cluttered minds during those days — much too still.

As I look back on that summer, I marvel at the patience of those for whom the topic of moving must have gotten mighty stale. Arlene "moved" with us, each step of our way, though she did not physically pack up her husband and boys. She was a rock to us, a continual support and interested sister, though her situation precluded a change of address. Hank, a graduate student blessed with a healthy disregard for possessions, kept us focused, by his presence, in the vision of building up the visible kingdom.

Even in the thick of the search, none of us could foresee the implications of us all moving into a neighborhood together. Now as we reflect, we are tempted to read into those days a godly calling, a holy and sacrificial timbre to our decision making. Actually we were often faltering and protective of our own interests. However, as house hunting became more serious, as people's commitment solidified, more and more of our weekly small group meetings became dialogue about community. Our choice of Arthur Gish's thought-provoking *Living in Christian Community* as a study book for our meetings was no coincidence. What were we doing?

Community, of course, is hardly a new concept in Mennonite circles. Though not of Mennonite background, I have regarded traditional Mennonite communities with a certain sense of awe. The distinctiveness of "community" lies for me in interdependence. This reliance on each other starkly contrasts our society's message that dependence is weakness.

Faith Church's strong interrelatedness was obvious from the minute we first walked through its friendly doors. This little gold mine of believers was big on commitment, though small in numbers. Its members harkened from all corners of the Twin Cities, but certainly had a corner of the kingdom in its homespun caring for one another. Community was here in Spirit.

We struggled hard as a group with questions that are difficult enough for individuals to sort out . . . questions reflecting our values as Mennonites and as humans with needs and wants.

Privacy is a priceless commodity for most middle-class people, and we were no exception. The thought of friends dropping by with more frequency suddenly brought threat of intrusion to our highly scheduled lives. A certain amount of soul searching went on. The implications of living in the same neighborhood were that the masks would not be so thick . . . not so many chances to hide those unsightly blemishes of one's lifestyle.

Status in possessions was a factor for us who pride ourselves as "simple livers." Living in a neighborhood that, let's face it, did not quite have that impeccable Mennonite charm, would be a bitter pill to swallow. This issue heightened as we contemplated buying duplexes together. Financial openness, personal preferences and conflicting priorities could all turn our little ivory palaces into "no-one's land."

Our priority lists for the perfect houses became lengthy and bold in their demands. We visited palaces and rat holes with high-pressured realtors and patient advocates who were simply curious about what we were doing.

One fine September day, just when our fervent house hunting began to look more like a wild goose chase, the "right" house appeared in the Sunday morning paper. Joan, Frank and I couldn't tell you much about Myron's sermon topic that Sunday, but within 12 hours the house would be ours. After a thoughtful, hard look at the duplex after church and a short huddle on the front porch with Berry and Sharon, we marched back inside to make our offer, and proceeded down the street to the neighborhood realty consultant. The next few hours we spent with Clark, drawing up the purchase agreement. We still remember fondly Clark's queries to Joan at the end of the day. "Why are you doing this? What's in it for you?" This future neighbor sensed something potentially distinctive in the transaction. Six months later Clark found himself part of the body at Faith Church. His caring, neighborly spirit is hard to beat.

Berry and Sharon's duplex purchase was more complex. A stubborn owner, unwilling to compromise, kept them in constant suspense over the large, stately duplex across the street from the church and parsonage. Complicating things all the more were the negotiations with Mennonite Central Committee, as plans were made to make the second and third floors of the house the new MCC unit for the Twin Cities. Berry and Sharon overcame many obstacles, and now their home is witness of God's faithfulness to them as his faithful people.

These first three households, plus the MCC unit, moved in the dead of winter 1981. They joined two church families already well rooted in the neighborhood, including Myron and Rickey Schrag next door to church. Since that time, five more households call our neighborhood home, and more seem to be coming.

Why did we move into this neighborhood together? To form a comfortable club? To save on gas? To reach out to one another or to the neighborhood?

The challenge of being a more visible and relevant kingdom motivated us. No great projects to evangelize the whole of south Minneapolis have gotten off the ground. Altar calls do not characterize every worship service. But we have made a beginning.

Weekly "Friday Nite Potlucks" serve as a common meeting ground for neighborhood and church community. It is here that our true "family-ness" blossoms. It is a blending of church and neighborhood, of great cooks and questionables, of old Mennonites, new Mennonites and non-Mennonites. As we make our faltering overtures in caring for one another, a few folks out there in the big world are drawn to us by the nurture and sense of commitment that they see.

We don't always verbalize our sense of God's leading into this neighborhood as we chat over the fence or bump into a sister at the hardware store. We don't always come away from potlucks or worship services with a sense of spirit-filled exhilaration. But we have claimed a corner of the kingdom for our own. •

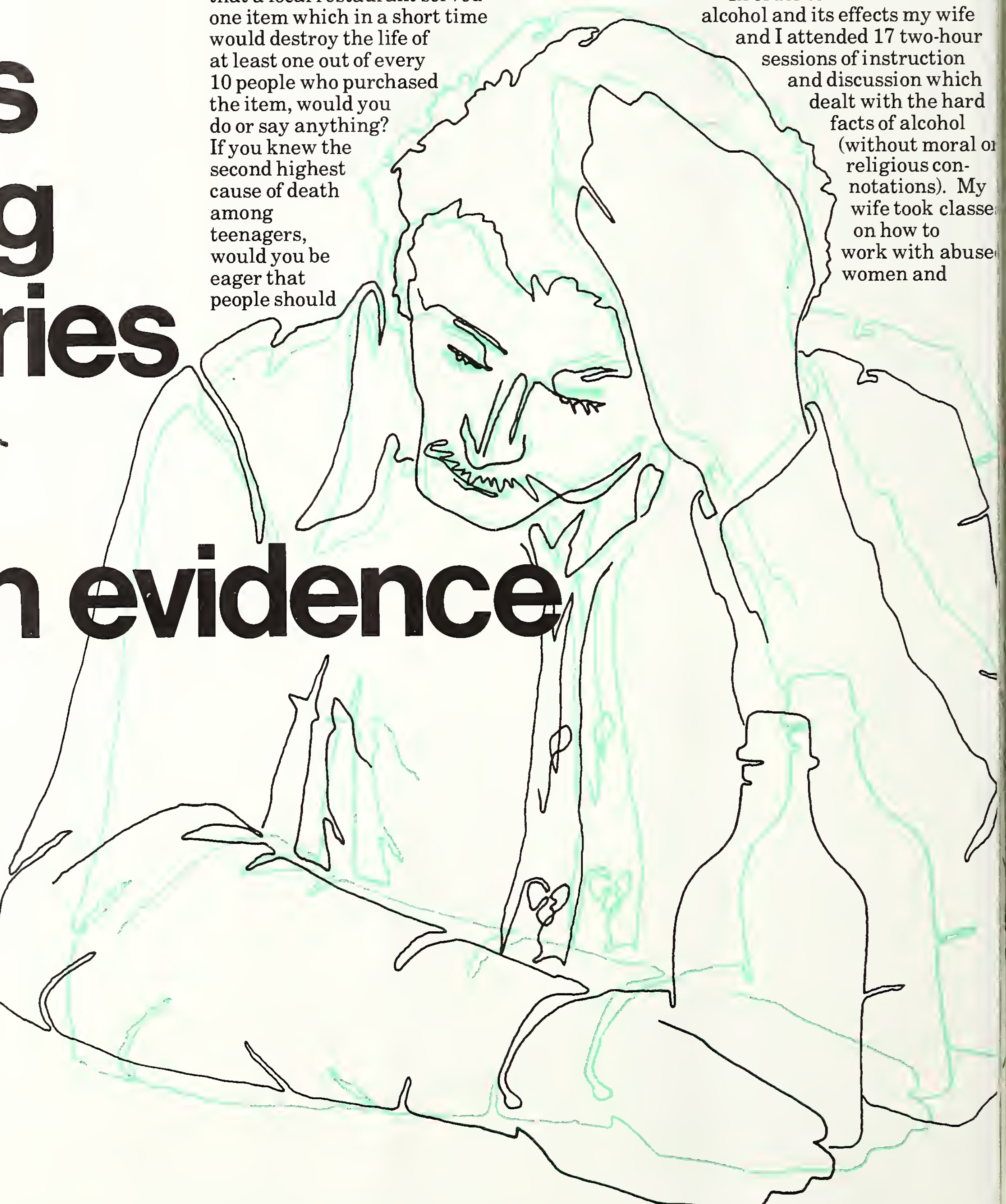
John M. Drescher

This drug carries its own evidence

If you became aware of a drug sold publicly in places all through your community which is killing 70 times as many U.S. citizens per year as the Vietnam War did and you could do something about it, would you do it? If you knew that a local restaurant served one item which in a short time would destroy the life of at least one out of every 10 people who purchased the item, would you do or say anything? If you knew the second highest cause of death among teenagers, would you be eager that people should know the cause and try to work at its solution?

All who read these statements are aware of this deadly drug — alcohol. And all who read this can do something about it.

In order to better understand alcohol and its effects my wife and I attended 17 two-hour sessions of instruction and discussion which dealt with the hard facts of alcohol (without moral o religious connotations). My wife took classe on how to work with abuse women and



Early Anabaptists were not afraid to advocate total abstinence from alcohol even at the risk of losing their lives.

serves as a volunteer in an abused women's program. In addition we have read books and stacks of other material dealing with the alcohol question.

After all of this it is not difficult to agree with Sidney Katz, staff writer for the *Toronto Star*, who studied alcoholism at Yale University. In his article "Booze: Why You Shouldn't Drink a Drop" Katz writes that he abandoned drinking alcohol and became a teetotaler, not because of a moral or religious conversion, but on grounds that to him are simple, pragmatic and irrefutable.

Everyone concerned for preserving life and peace must be concerned about alcohol. In the United States alcohol is killing people faster than the deadliest wars in all history. The executive secretary of the International Commission for the Prevention of Alcoholism said recently that of the 6 million known alcoholics in the United States, 350,000 would be buried before the year is out. Vietnam killed 5,000 Americans per year.

Alcohol is the cause of 60 percent of teenage deaths on the highway and 50 percent of all highway deaths. When you put that in specific figures it means that 600 people per week are killed on highways as a direct result of drinking. The highway is the most deadly battlefield of the world.

Alcohol shortens the life span of one out of every 13 people. Alcoholics live 10-12 years less than non-drinkers. Half of all drownings are alcohol related and, according to a study by John Hopkins University, 50 percent of pedestrians killed in accidents had been drinking.

Everyone concerned for youth must be concerned about alcohol. The U.S. National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism says its figures are conservative, yet it points out there are 3.3 million problem drinkers among youth in the 14-17 age range. This represents nearly one in every five in this age group. More than 62 percent of all seventh graders and 87 percent of all 12th graders drink. Alcohol use among teens is up 90 percent in 10 years, according to *U.S. News and World Report.* The Department of Health, Education and Welfare's survey of fourth and fifth graders on the West Coast reveals that 45 percent consider themselves ongoing users of alcohol. There are in the United States today 100,000 9- to 12-year-olds who can be labeled as alcoholics. Stephanie Brown, associate director of the alcohol clinic at Stanford University Medical Center, says that "alcoholism in adolescents develops rapidly, with some teenagers becoming alcoholics within six months of taking their first drink."

Alcohol is the number one drug problem of youth. One of the reasons for the rapid growth among teens is that parents, frightened by other drug use, think alcohol is less harmful and do not face up to its seriousness. One-third of high school students boast of getting drunk at least once a month.

Jean Kilborne researched the influence of the media on social values and attitudes. Speaking at Sweet Briar (Va.) College on "Under the Influence: the Pushing of Alcohol Via Advertising," Kilborne pointed out that alcohol advertisements depict images of happiness, success, power, independence, confidence, masculinity, romance and sexual fulfillment. These are images of what youth deeply desire. But, she said, these are precisely the qualities and attributes that are destroyed by the alcohol user.

The alcohol industry surrounds and bombards us with $900 million a year in advertising, trying to make alcohol the norm for all and aiming primarily at the teenager and college student, even to the point of producing milkshakes or soda "look alike drinks" for those who haven't as yet developed the taste of alcohol.

Everyone concerned about law and order must be concerned about alcohol. Studies clearly show there is a close relation between alcohol consumption and the rate of community crime. Alcohol is involved in 80 percent of all crime and 80 percent of people in prison are there because of alcohol-related crimes. Jaren F. Tinkleburg of Stanford University, speaking of the close link between alcohol and violence of all kinds, said, "Alcohol is a disinhibitor of social control." Crime and alcohol are bosom buddies.

Everyone concerned about human welfare must be concerned about alcohol. One in every 10 people who drink, whether beer, wine or whiskey, will become alcoholic. There is no way to predict who this one will be. Alcohol demands, in every community, all kinds of social and religious agencies, in addition to law enforcement, to attempt to deal with the problem it creates. The known cost to the taxpayer for government services alone exceeds $15 billion per year in the United States. The Second Report to the United States Congress on Alcohol and Health from the Secretary of Health and Welfare in 1975

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estimated the cost of alcohol abuse to the U.S. economy to be about $30 billion annually. That's enough to employ 1.5 million people at $20,000 per year.

Everyone concerned about health must be concerned about alcohol. When we look at the physical effects of drinking it is overwhelming. This is speaking not only about alcoholism but also about social drinking. Alcohol depresses the function of the brain cells with every drink. Daniel Sutter, who has given much careful study to the problem, writes, ". . . as a neuroanatomist and neurophysiologist, I believe the use of alcohol has very serious implications for the Christian." He continues, "To me it is extremely serious to voluntarily subject one's highest levels of intellect and emotions to the anesthetizing effects of a drug which has no food value to the body but rather irritates and destroys its tissues. It is estimated that 85 percent of all hospital admissions are alcohol related; this includes not only those who drink but also people affected by them."

According to a recent news bulletin on mental care, "60 percent of every health-care dollar treats diseases related to alcohol and tobacco."

Every drink affects the functioning of the brain. Studies show that drinking affects every organ system of the body except the kidneys. Recent tests by Richard D. Hazelett of the College of Optometry in Memphis, Tenn., discovered that even a small amount of alcohol — .05 percent below the level of intoxication — has a tremendous effect on the vision of the drinker. This is speaking of social drinking, not drunkenness.

Cirrhosis of the liver, caused principally by excessive alcohol intake, is, in fact, the seventh ranking cause of death in the United States.

Everyone concerned about the family must be concerned about alcohol. Nearly all family feuds which result in serious injury or death are due to alcohol. Even if alcohol were not so harmful, it has no food value and takes from family needs. Not only does it destroy families and bring untold sorrow and suffering, but the annual cost when both husband and wife drink can easily come to $2,000 to $3,000 and more per year. Alcohol is a major cause of family breakups. Ann Landers concludes that alcoholism has ruined more marriages than any other single element. Twenty-eight million children in the United States have alcoholic parents. A parent who drinks gives up arguments against the child's use of other drugs.

Everyone concerned about what the Scripture teaches must be concerned about alcohol. The Bible has more than 600 references to wine and strong drink. It contains more warnings against alcohol than against adultery, stealing or other of the worst sins of humanity. In light of all the warnings against alcohol, it is strange that people select the few debatable references as an excuse for indulgence. Even without going to the Bible all we know about alcohol and its effects runs counter to every moral, social, religious and spiritual principle.

Anyone who studies the effects of alcohol today knows that the evidence is clear. The reasons for abstinence are, as Sidney Katz says, simple, pragmatic and irrefutable.

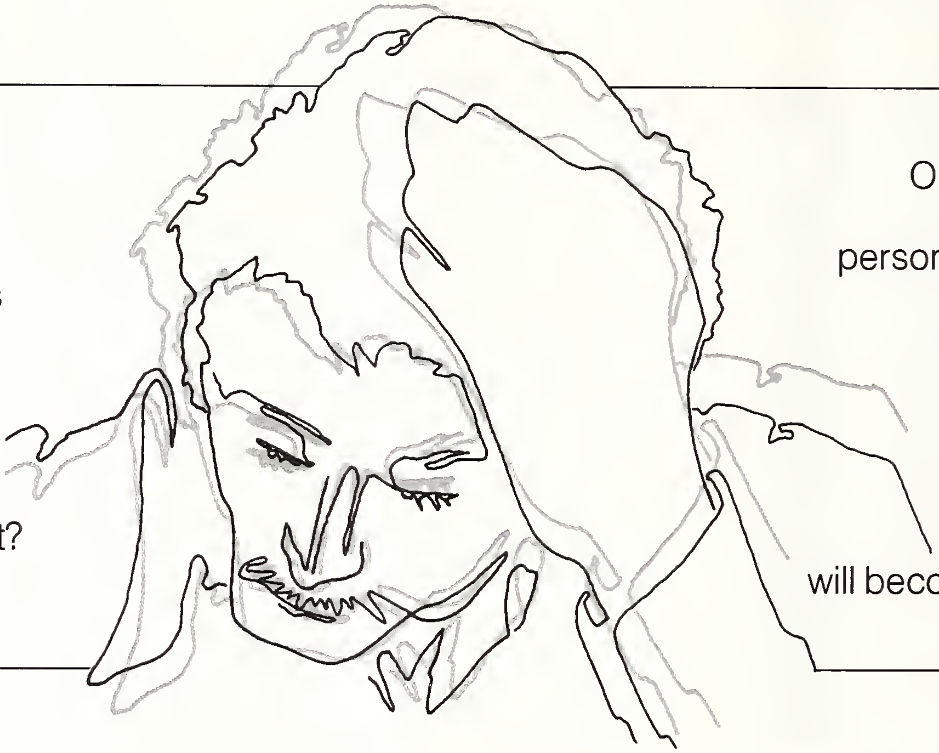
Every Anabaptist ought to be clear on the use of alcohol. Here is one area it seems present-day Mennonites are selective and silent regarding the past. Why?

At a time when drinking was assumed, the earliest Anabaptist confession, the Seven Articles of Schleitheim (1527), forbade the patronage of drinking places. Capito, the reformer of Strasbourg, states that the Anabaptists refrain from drinking. Bullinger, Zwingli's successor in Zurich, in his 1560 work against the Anabaptists states that they drank only unfermented sweet cider and water.

Further, in those days it was the custom upon entering an inn to drink to the health of the other guests. If a man came in and refused to drink, it was a dead giveaway that he was an Anabaptist. Michael Seifensieder was discovered because of his refusal to drink in Vienna and burned at the stake on March 13, 1536.

Protestant reformers refused total abstinence for fear of promoting legalism. The Anabaptists had no such fear. They were not afraid to advocate strict ethics and discipleship. •

Alcohol is one of the deadliest killers in the world today. Can you afford to play with it?



One in every 10 persons who drinks, whether beer, wine or whiskey, will become alcoholic.

Carving up the estate

Calvin Redekop

I will not forget the night many years ago (it was about 2 a.m.) when I finally agreed to buy the minimum amount of life insurance to get an especially persistent salesman off my back. But the "capitulation" helped me for many years. When I was asked for an appointment, I always said, "I have a policy and my agent is taking good care of me." But the fellow I had in my office yesterday threw me a new curve. The case is still pending, but I have an appointment in two weeks to answer his charges that I need at least another $100,000 of insurance.

He made one pitch that was similar to all the other salesmen I have encountered: "You need more life insurance to cover the costs of transferring your estate to your spouse and children." This task is bound to get through to the potential client, for the thought of condemning sobbing wife and children to the pauper's court or having them thrown on the street after the sheriff padlocks the house is too much even for the most calloused among us.

There have been a few people who did not fall for that line, among them Andrew Carnegie, who did not pass on a dime to his children. He maintained that he loved his children too much to ruin them with the power of wealth and the destructiveness of receiving something they had not worked for. But the majority of us and the super rich still seem concerned to pass it on.

For at least 20 years now some of us have uttered statements of the sentiments: Christians simply cannot pass on to their children the wealth that they have accrued in their lifetimes. It is contrary to the teachings of Christ, and it is psychologically and socially destructive to do so. The first response is typically revulsion at the idea of leaving your children unprepared or handicapped in the fierce struggles they will face. When asked where parents got their wealth, they usually admit that they started from scratch. "But times are different now," they say.

The second response is usually to the effect, "Does not the Bible say that we are to take care of people, especially those of the household of faith? Are we not infidels or worse if we throw our children out on the streets?" We do not say to forsake your children nor hate them. We do say that the *bulk* of the inheritance does not belong to them, it belongs to God. As Christians we have as much obligation to clothe, feed and care for our children as anyone else, and maybe a *bit* more, but *how much more*? Do the children of a wealthy Christian family have any moral rights to greater amounts of wealth than the child next door who by chance was born into a poor family?

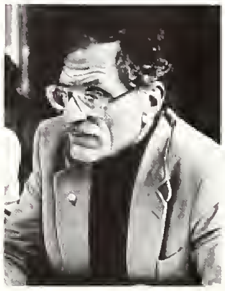
The production of wealth (food, shelter, clothing, tools, etc.) is good. The consumption of wealth is also good, as long as everyone has relatively equal chance to consume. The problem is hoarding. When Christians take more than their share to keep, they are on thin ice. And passing what parents have amassed on to children is a way of hoarding. It is keeping that wealth from being redistributed so that others have a chance to be satisfied. No economic system has been able to expunge the "hoarding instinct," but capitalism probably encourages it most.

By this time I am sure I have lost 47 percent of my readers. "What a cruel way to think of family obligations," you may say. "I'll bet you haven't talked to your kids about it yet," others may opine. What bothers me is that my position is not radical at all; in fact, it is very conservative when compared with what some Christians have done throughout the ages and with what Christ said about the issue. Jesus said, ". . . whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not fit to be my disciple" (Matthew 10:37).

Jesus made other equally harsh statements about forsaking family ties for the sake of the gospel. "But that is so abstract, and it certainly cannot be applied to our day." All right then, what of Jesus' parable about the rich fool (Luke 12:13-22)? The parable begins when an heir to a family estate asks Jesus to be the adjudicator between himself and his brother because they can't agree on a fair division. Jesus adroitly sidesteps the role and instead says, "Watch out and guard yourselves from every kind of greed. . . ." He then makes the point by telling the story about the successful farmer who was amassing crops, animals, bank accounts and land holdings. In a culture where family was central, "storing grains and goods" could mean nothing else than providing for himself and his family. And yet he is called a fool. Why? First, because he lost his own soul to materialism. Secondly, because as Jesus ironically asks, "Whose will these goods be?" he is particularly addressing those who were fighting about the inheritance when the parable began. So we have come full circle. To live for amassing material things causes one to lose one's own soul, and to pass them on to the children is the beginning of grief.

A major innovation for Christians would be for parents and children to sit down together and candidly discuss what should be done with the annual crops or income, the stored grains or profits, the accrued lands and properties. It is possible the children are more generous and non-materialistic than most parents think.

I am sure by now you are convinced I fell off my rocker, having misused the Bible and Jesus' teachings. I hope you are right, otherwise you and I may have to call the Mennonite Foundation representatives very soon.



Calvin Redekop is professor of sociology at Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, ON N2L 3G6.

The drunk driver

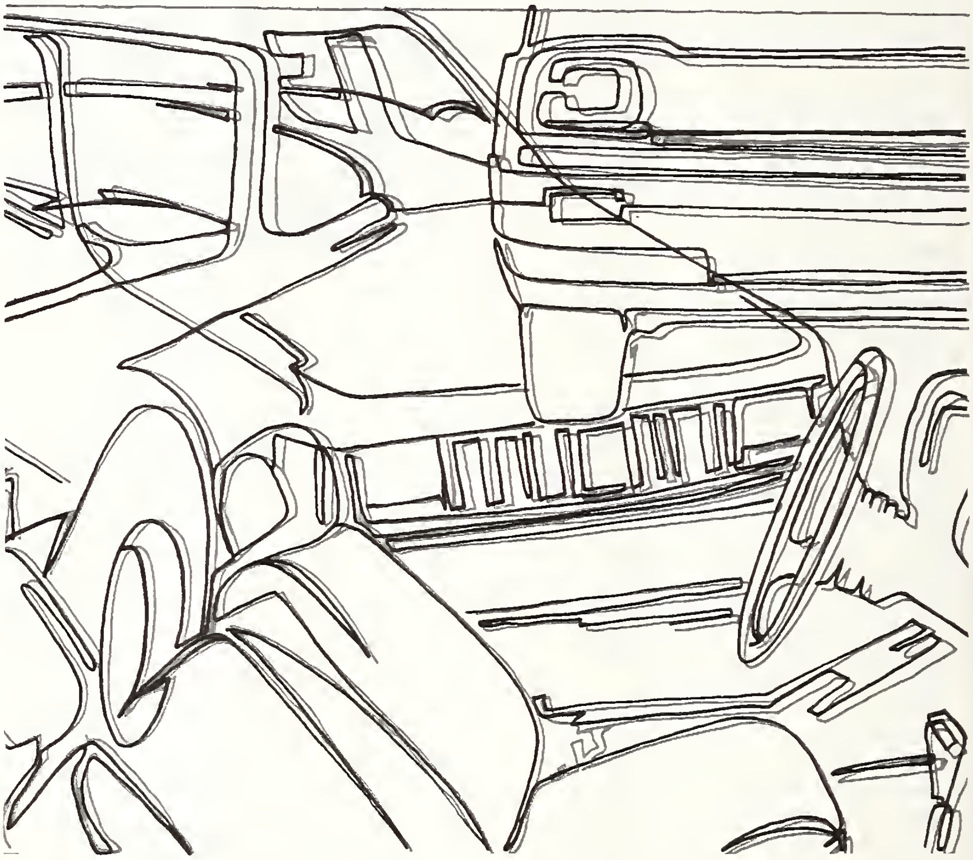
Emory Draper

The drunk driver . . .
. . . every 10th driver on the road after midnight.
. . . causes the death of 50 percent of the single people under 23 who die each year.
. . . was the killer of 25,000 people on U.S. highways in 1981.
. . . has been the killer of at least 50 percent of all people killed by autos in the past 20 years or more.
. . . has killed almost as many people as have been killed in all the wars fought by the United States.
. . . has most likely killed one of your close friends.
. . . totally disables approximately 50,000 additional people each year.

Who is this person? The drunk driver . . .
. . . is your neighbor in any town.
. . . is anyone you know who has taken several ounces or more of alcohol in any form and then driven.
. . . is in a large percentage under 25 and single.

I'm not sure any statistical information has been kept concerning church affiliation, but it would be my observation that they probably in large degree are baptized church members.

What punishment do these people get for dispensing all this grief? In most states and provinces they will get less than a $500 fine. They will be on the road doing more of the same in less than six months. It is only rarely that they will be confined. In some cases they may have to go to an alcohol rehabilitation program.



What is being done about this monumental problem? What should be done? Many states have changed their legal drinking age to 21. In states where this has been done, deaths and disabilities have been reduced by one-third. Alcohol-related rehabilitation schools which have been set up have helped to some degree to keep down second offenses. Approximately 15 years ago in England a law was passed that reduced highway deaths by two-thirds the first year. Any driver could be stopped and required to take a proof-of-drunkenness test. If people refused the test or were proven drunk, they lost their license for five years. A second violation was a revocation of driving privilege for life.

It seems to me that all these laws are good, but I'm not sure it is fair to serve prohibition on the 18- to 21-year-olds. They are only part of the problem. Secondly, prohibition didn't work well earlier in this country when it was served upon everyone. The stronger law that is used in England certainly would be better and would dispense justice to all age groups.

The pain and suffering the drunken drivers render is real. What should our relationship to them be as actively involved Christians? Is there anything we can do? The Bible indicates that drunkenness is an age-old problem. Much Scripture relates to such people, what state they are in and how they act. Jeremiah 23:9 — "Stagger as a drunkard." Matthew 24:29 seems to infer the drunkard doesn't know what is happening. 1 Corinthians 11:21 — drinking brings shame. Proverbs 20:1 — wine gives false courage; hard liquor leads to brawls. What fools people to let it master them? Proverbs 23:21-24 indicates this sorry state.

We can stand up as a single loud voice whenever and wherever we have a chance to denounce the evils of drunkenness and the attendant pain and suffering it brings. We can support elected officials in getting stronger laws passed to remove those who continue to ignore and maim others on the highway. I believe we are the only collective voice that has the strength and desire to see corrective legislation passed.

What can you do? I believe Romans 14:21 gives direction. As Christians we are told to quit drinking wine or doing anything that would offend our brother or sister or make him or her sin. Be an example.

Celebrating 75 years together

Jerri Hofer

Three-quarters of a century ago four couples were united in marriage at the "Spitzburger" farm south of Freeman, S.D., with all their friends and relatives present as witnesses. Now, 75 years later, one couple, Elizabeth (Graber) and William Senner, have happily observed their 75th anniversary.

Visiting with Bill and Lizzie was relaxed and unhurried as they reminisced about their wedding on June 26, 1907. Bill talked about horses and buggies and the large crowd attending the wedding. He jokingly added it would be easier to tell who wasn't there than who was.

Cars and honeymoons may not have been unheard of at that time, but they certainly weren't common in Freeman. Bill and Lizzie did not take a honeymoon but started their married life farming 3½ miles southeast of Freeman, which they continued for 31 years.

They had three daughters and three sons. The three daughters and one son still living were present with their families to help Bill and Lizzie celebrate their 75th anniversary on June 26. Bill and Lizzie have 10 grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren.

Throughout Bill and Lizzie's life they endured suffering as well as happiness. An especially hard time was in the 1920s when Bill fell victim to tuberculosis for seven years. By 1923 he was on his deathbed. One doctor gave him two weeks to live, and another doctor gave him only two days.

Then, unexplainably, his health changed direction.

His condition began to improve. Bill noted that he did not snap out of it but improved slowly. It took a couple of years before he recovered from a weak 110-pound man who could barely move to the healthy man he still was at his 75th anniversary.

This change in health puzzles Bill. He asked himself what the Lord wanted him to do next. Bill doesn't know if he has answered God's request yet today, but he definitely feels God must have had a purpose for him to go on living, working for the Lord.

Bill stressed, "My wife was also a wonderful nurse, taking care of me all these years."

Their church work really began after Bill's bout with tuberculosis. He was elected a member of the board of deacons at the Salem Mennonite Church in the 1930s, serving for 15 successive years. Later he became a Sunday school teacher for over 40 years, teaching a class of older women for 22 of those years.

Bill said, "I'm more than convinced that I benefited more than the church when I was a deacon.

Liz and Bill Senner are living evidence of God's ongoing grace and love.

"My wife was a standby and great help in my work, although she never was a public speaker or considered a leader," Bill added, "but she always stood by my side. I sometimes think I couldn't have made it if it wouldn't have been for her. She also was a great home builder and housekeeper. She is the one that helped to keep the family together as much as possible. She also loved to invite friends and relatives for meals. This was the joy of her life, and we really have many friends even today."

Bill and Lizzie quit farming in 1938 and moved to Freeman into the house where they still live. Bill was manager of Freeman Cooperative Gas and Oil Company for 19 years before he retired in 1957.

The Senners looked back and Lizzie said fondly, "When I think back, I think we really did have a good time together . . . with all the ups and downs."

Kathryn, their oldest daughter, said, "They helped each other through all kinds of difficulties. They always were able to adjust to whatever happened to their children or grandchildren and always welcomed them to their home.

Bill pointed out that throughout their life together their faith in God was all-important. He explained that with all the troubles one has in life, if there is nothing to take a hold of, you sink without question. "Faith in God helps you through," he said. "When you face troubles with faith, the hills that seemed so high simmer down when you get closer, and they aren't as high as you thought they were."

Although he feels there is no one trick to making a marriage last 75 years because ". . . there are no two people alike in this world," he advises couples to learn to compromise. "There has to be compromise made in order to enjoy life," he said, explaining that husband and wife are two persons even though they are joined as one.

Bill also suggested to couples, "Settle all your arguments before the sun goes down." Husband and wife should not let anything stay between them when the day is over.

When asked if they were setting an 80th anniversary as a goal for the future, Bill — reaching 95 last August and Lizzie next May — said, "There's no use to make plans like that when you're old. We just live day by day."

The Senners look at the future as they have the past. Bill explained, "Life is but a highway on which the years go by. Sometimes the road is level, sometimes the hills are high; but as you travel onward toward a future that is unknown, you can make each mile you travel a heavenly stepping-stone. This was and is our life."

Antonio Arevalo, a Colombian pastor, was commissioned at the Dallas Mennonite Fellowship on Jan. 30 for Spanish-language church planting in the city. He will spend a two-year sabbatical in Dallas, and his outreach will be jointly sponsored by the General Conference's Commission on Home Ministries, the Western District Conference and the South Central Conference of the Mennonite Church.

One hundred Salvadoran refugees and 30 religious groups joined a lawsuit Jan. 24 claiming that President Reagan's certification on human rights in El Salvador was issued in bad faith and is false. The group challenged the legality of continued military assistance for El Salvador. These refugees alleged that it is such human rights violations from which they have fled and that their ability to return home is directly affected by the continued supply of military aid. They therefore seek to have a court rule that the certification is false, that gross violations of human rights continue in El Salvador and that military assistance should be halted.

NEWS

Media group cancels responsible living project

Newton, Kan. — At a meeting in Chicago Jan. 3-4, the Inter-Mennonite Media Group canceled plans to carry out the Responsible Living Campaign, including production of a proposed prime-time TV special based on the book *Living More With Less.*

The decision to cancel the project, under development since 1979, means that the research and development invested in it will not result in the airing of an hour-long TV special at any time in the near future.

Although the media group cited the "inability to obtain necessary funding as its key difficulty," a host of other factors also played into the decision to shut down the project.

The IMMG, a consortium of broadcast media agencies from the General Conference, the Mennonite Church, the Mennonite Brethren Church and the Church of the Brethren, has produced various radio and TV spots over the past 14 years. The Responsible Living Campaign, however, was its first venture into programming from prime-time television.

The Mennonite associate editor Larry Cornies asked Barth Hague, director of Faith and Life Radio and Television and member of IMMG, to explain the collapse of the project in its intended form:

Was money the main problem in keeping the Responsible Living Campaign going, or were there other factors?

Our problem could be described as a lack of access to necessary funding. That lack of access was due to other factors. During the past three years, some of the IMMG member denominations were reorganized and priorities were changed. Reorganization meant that several of the people who were instrumental in creating the project were replaced, and the new representatives couldn't take full ownership in the campaign.

Another problem was poor public relations on IMMG's part. We started getting negative reactions from important regional conference leaders who thought the theme wasn't a good one and who didn't think churches would get involved in the project. Since we would have relied heavily on a partnership with local congregations, that support was vital to our continued success.

Why didn't those leaders like the theme?

The most common criticism I heard was that most Mennonites don't live simple lifestyles and therefore we have no business talking about it publicly. I was also told on occasion that responsible lifestyle is not related to peace and that we should instead use television to talk about peace issues.

Do you accept those arguments?

Of course not. But they caused a certain degree of negative sentiment within the churches nonetheless.

How much did the state of the economy contribute to the termination of the program?

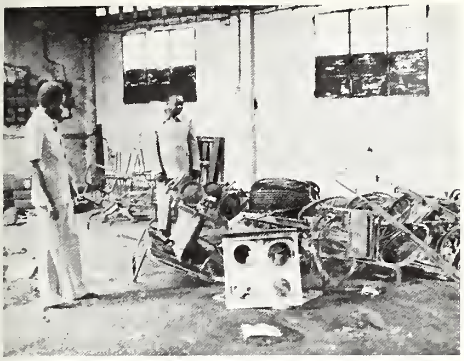
The economy had an indirect effect. Those who support the work of the church are being cautious with their money, and rightly so. But I don't believe some observers who claim that many Mennonites are increasingly unemployed and are being hurt by the economy. Most Mennonites are doing fairly well financially.

In fact, our fund-raising efforts in the General Conference for this project were well received. We had developed support among a variety of agencies and individuals interested in seeing the project carried forward. If we'd been allowed to continue, we would have raised the necessary funds for the campaign.

Is that related to what you called poor public relations?

Yes. Mennonites and other Christians are willing to support projects which they understand to be important to the

FLRT director Hague: termination of a big project because of poor PR



Two workers investigate destruction of hospital equipment at a church warehouse in Zaire.

A fire on Dec. 17, 1982, severely damaged a material aid warehouse belonging to the Church of Christ in Zaire, the national organization representing all Protestant groups in Zaire. Mennonite Central Committee worker J. Marc Hostetler reported total damage and losses amounted to over $244,000. Office furniture, hospital equipment and food aid ready for distribution was destroyed. A small amount of MCC beef was lost in the fire.

Mayfair Mennonite Church in Saskatoon sponsored a series of meetings Nov. 14-17, 1982, with cult expert Walter Martin of San Juan Capistrano, Calif. Martin spoke on the following topics: "Twisted Scriptures; How the Cults Abuse God's Word," "Islam, Iran and Bible Prophecy," "Does Christianity Present a Good Case?" and "Christian Living Today."

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work of the kingdom. I'm afraid IMMG, myself included, talked more about the magnitude of this project and failed to emphasize its importance in furthering the gospel message.

Did the project get adequate support from denominational offices and leaders?

It varied. Some denominations were very supportive. Others gave the project the lowest possible priority. The General Conference had given the project a very high priority.

Did the General Conference "pull its own weight" in trying to keep the project alive?

We tried everything we possibly could. We had already approved plans to contribute $100,000 to the campaign. We argued for its continuation. We were even willing to attempt a compromise proposal which would have been much less expensive.

But the Faith and Life Radio and Television committee considered the matter last November and recommended the project be dropped. It obviously saw the handwriting on the wall.

Many organizations and individuals contributed money to the TV special. How much was spent and what happens to the remaining funds? Will there be any returns on the money already spent?

Over the course of three years we spent about $40,000 in research and development. We had raised about $100,000 and had an additional $150,000 pledged. Of course, our total project budget was about $750,000.

"We started getting negative reactions from important regional conference leaders who thought the theme wasn't a good one and who didn't think churches would get involved in the project. . . . [Their] support was vital to our continued success."

Money raised from outside sources like Mennonite Mutual Aid and Mennonite Central Committee will be returned intact. After remaining expenses are paid, excess funds will be returned to the four denominations involved.

Materials that had so far been developed to support the project will be made available to certain groups which have expressed an interest in them.

Is there a chance that the Responsible Living Campaign can ever be revived?

There's already a possibility that some groups will use the materials developed to produce a series of TV spots on responsible lifestyle. But I seriously doubt that a prime-time TV special will be developed on this theme — or any theme — in the near future.

What does this decision mean for the IMMG?

IMMG will continue to function. We need to grapple with the obvious differences and inadequacies in working interdenominationally. We need to streamline our decision-making procedures. But we've learned a lot. We'll spend a bit of time regrouping, then we'll be back with new ideas and other projects.

Canadian conference receives 96 percent of 1982 budget

Winnipeg (CMC) — The Conference of Mennonites in Canada didn't meet its budget in 1982, but there was rejoicing anyway.

As late as the last week in December, board and staff members were bracing themselves for a serious financial shortfall. Using the experience of the past several years, projections indicated that only 92 percent of the needed donations of $1,382,000 would likely come in. But in the last few days before the books were closed for the year there was a surge of receipts from congregations and individual donors. The final tally showed that $1,333,000 (96.45 percent of the budget) had come in. Thus, instead of facing a deficit of $100,000 in the year's operation as had been expected, the shortfall for the year amounted to under $30,000.

The accumulated deficit, which now stands at $110,000, and the worsening economic climate in much of Canada led the CMC finance committee and the General Board to cut the approved 1983 expense budget by 5 percent. One of the ways in which this reduction is being accomplished is by giving the conference's staff, which numbers over 60 people, raises of only $600 each for 1983. This includes Native Ministries workers, Canadian Mennonite Bible College faculty and all other persons employed by the conference.

In order for CMC to erase its deficit over a three-year period and retain as much of its existing program as possible, it will need an increase of at least 8 percent in its donation receipts in 1983.

Finances was a major item of discussion at the CMC's annual Council of Boards, which brought together the conference's various committees and boards in Winnipeg Feb. 2-5.

"In His Image" is the theme of the Canadian Mennonite Health Assembly annual conference, to be held April 27-29 in Clearbrook, B.C. Marvin Hein, pastor and author from Fresno, Calif., is tentatively planned as the keynote speaker.

Luis Palau, Latin American evangelist, claims that Guatemalan president Rios Montt is "genuinely a born-again Christian." After meeting with Montt during the evangelist's Guatemala Crusade, Nov. 21-28, 1982, Palau said that the press has been unfair to him. "Rios Montt wants to please God above man," Palau said. "He is sending shock waves up and down the country because he is trying to run the country on biblical principles."

"Conservation/Ecology: A Mennonite Mandate," a symposium on what planners called "the ultimate peace issue," was held Dec. 27-30, 1982, at Laurelville Mennonite Church Center, Mt. Pleasant, Pa. The aim of the symposium, brainchild of Arnold Cressman, was to "examine the Mennonite church's responsibility to live at peace with the environment in light of the Scriptures, the past and present experience of the church, and the current and future world context in which the church lives and bears witness."

Salvadoran agency denounces massacre at cooperative farm

Santa Ana, El Salvador (MCC) — Approximately 100 Salvadoran soldiers surrounded nine houses that belonged to members of the La Florida Farming Cooperative on Nov. 20. After night fell they forced the men out of their shacks, leaving the women and children inside. The soldiers then killed seven members of the cooperative by cutting their throats.

CREDHO, the social arm of the small Salvadoran Episcopal church that oversees the project, denounced the massacre. News of the massacre stunned Mennonite Central Committee workers who had visited the project several times in the last year.

The army apparently carried out the massacre under orders from higher officials. CREDHO stated, "The soldiers' commanders did not hesitate to call each other by their own names, as if they wanted to leave proof of their presence and participation in these acts, thus showing the extent to which they felt they had an absolute guarantee of impunity."

CREDHO also reported that the bodies remained in the sun under soldier guard for two days and that no legal authority visited the site of the massacre to certify the cause of death.

The denunciation continues, "Being such hard workers, it seems ridiculous to make any kind of connections between these people and suspicious, underground political activities. In the face of such indescribable acts of violence, the CREDHO Association can do no less than condemn and repudiate these criminal and barbaric acts and raise its most energetic protest to the highest leaders of the army and the government, who are obliged to protect and respect human rights in El Salvador."

Some of the six widowed mothers and 24 fatherless children have left La Florida and are now living in displaced persons' camps, which abound in El Salvador. The massacre was a cruel blow to a church-related, non-violent attempt at land reform.

Last March this peasant woman stood proudly in front of her new adobe brick house in La Florida. As a result of the massacre in which her husband was killed she has now fled from the cooperative and was last seen in a displaced persons' camp in eastern El Salvador.

MCC worker Philip Hofer, who visited the project last March, wrote of the hope that La Florida brought to over 60 impoverished families who were landless due to the endemic land distribution problems in El Salvador or as a result of the civil war. In El Salvador less than 3 percent of the population owns over 90 percent of the land, leaving most peasants without even a small plot of their own. This system creates large numbers of migrant farm workers who must work on the large land holdings in order to survive.

Land reform in El Salvador is fraught with setbacks and discouragements. The large landowners, backed by the army, want to keep things the way they are. In an earlier MCC story on the La Florida farm cooperative, Hofer, who then worked in Guatemala, alluded to possible difficulties ahead for the La Florida cooperative. "One wonders how long such a project can continue without being affected by the political violence," he said.

Despite such atrocities, the Reagan administration certified to the U.S. Congress in January that the Salvadoran government is making progress in human rights. The certification means that nearly $100 million in military aid will continue flowing to that country of 5 million.

Heavy viewers of television accept distorted TV life as real life, says George Gerbner, dean of the Annenberg School of Communications at the University of Pennsylvania. For example, a criminal act is 10 times more likely to happen on television than in real life. Therefore, according to Gerbner, heavy TV viewers (those watching more than four hours of television a day) routinely exaggerate their chances of being victimized by crime in the real world. Gerbner's findings are based on his analysis the past 15 years of 1,600 prime-time programs with more than 15,000 characters.

Unseasonal weather during the Christmas week caused extensive flooding in Louisiana and triggered additional floods in Mississippi, Alabama, Tennessee and Kentucky. Thousands more people were added to the number of homeless who suffered from storms in late November and early December. "During the holiday season over 25,000 families in nine states were adversely affected by hurricanes, tornados, windstorms and floods," says Nelson Hostetter, executive coordinator of Mennonite Disaster Service.

Each day, an average of four square miles of prime U.S. farmland is covered by new shopping centers, highways, houses and airports.

In fiscal 1982, the Reagan administration signed agreements with 76 countries for $21.1 billion in foreign military sales. That's three times as many arms as sold the year before.

MCC, mission workers protest injustices in South Africa

Mbabane, Swaziland (MCC) — Workers with Mennonite Central Committee, Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission and Eastern Mennonite Board of Missions met for a retreat in Swaziland at the end of December 1982. The raid by South African troops on the capital of Lesotho a week earlier and the arrest of many South African refugees in Swaziland during the retreat shocked and saddened the workers.

The 65 workers in Botswana, Lesotho, Mozambique, South Africa and Swaziland responded by writing an open letter to their home congregations and church leaders to express their deep concerns about the situation in neighboring South Africa and North American involvement. The Mennonite and Brethren in Christ workers are involved in education, agriculture, health, appropriate technology and church work.

The letter reads, "The escalating violence has profound implications for our Christian witness in the region. National resources needed for development are redirected into military purposes. Community tensions are intensified, creating environments of fear and suspicion which impede community development."

In their letter, the workers list a number of gross injustices that are the source for discontent among the people of South Africa. The vastly unequal distribution of land and income between blacks and whites is supported by the continuing creation of "homelands" in which blacks have their South African citizenship revoked and are forced to resettle on undesirable lands. The educational system is purposely structured by quality and content to keep blacks in a subordinate position. The repressive security legislation includes banning, a legal order prohibiting travel and meeting with more than one person, and detention without trial. Blacks, coloreds and Asians cannot vote.

As blacks leave South Africa to struggle against the system, South African security and military forces cross borders to attack opposition groups and neighboring countries are victims of the resulting violence.

The letter continues, "We recognize that our own countries are not without injustice. Further, we recognize that we are implicated through our silence and by our financial investments in South Africa.

The workers ask members of their congregations to write to their elected representatives, asking them to press the governments of the United States and Canada to exert their influence to bring about change in South Africa. They believe that the current U.S. policy of "constructive engagement," which seeks to build stronger ties with South Africa, has resulted in a hardening of South Africa's internal apartheid policies.

Particular issues where U.S. and Canadian influence is crucial are the negotiations for the independence of Namibia, sanctions on the sale of arms and nuclear technology to South Africa and human rights violations against South African political detainees.

Commission hires marketing/bookstore manager

Newton, Kan. (GCMC) — The General Conference's Commission on Education has announced the appointment of Brent H. Sprunger of Spring City, Pa., to the positions of marketing manager for Faith and Life Press and manager of Faith and Life Bookstore in Newton.

As bookstore manager, Sprunger will succeed Susan Jantzen, who will leave her position July 1. He will assume responsibility for the day-to-day operation of the retail outlet.

Sprunger

The position of marketing manager is a new one and intends to give greater visibility to Faith and Life Press publications. Sprunger will be responsible for promotion, sales and advertising of FLP units in both the denominational and secular marketplaces. Each of his two positions is half time.

Sprunger was employed previously by the conference from 1977-79, when he managed Faith and Life Bookstore in Berne, Ind. He is a 1976 graduate of Goshen (Ind.) College, where he majored in communications and peace studies. Since 1979 he has been sales manager for Valley Forge Stove Company in Spring City.

Brent and Peggy Sprunger and their two children plan to relocate to the Newton area near the first of April. The family has been attending the Indian Valley Mennonite Church in Harleysville, Pa., although Brent's home congregation is First Mennonite Church in Berne.

Pastor needed

A pastor is needed to serve in the Emmaus Mennonite Church of Wymark, Sask. Duties to commence Sept. 1, 1983.

Please contact:
Fred Heese
Box 25
Wymark, SK S0N 2Y0.

Krefeld, West Germany — As part of the festivities commemorating the 300th anniversary of the sailing of 13 Krefeld families and their establishment of Germantown, Pa., a reception was held here on Jan. 9 to formally thank Mennonite Central Committee for the food kitchens established in the wake of World War II. Peter Bartel of Wichita, Kan., and Katherine Derksen of Mountain Lake, Minn., who worked as volunteers in Krefeld in early 1946, were the honored guests.

Peter Bartel is honored guest at Krefeld celebration.

A Puerto Rican mother of 14 will host the first participant in a pay-to-be-poor program designed to teach the affluent about poor people. Sylvia Kay Ambaruch, 47, a housewife-turned-student from Oswego, N.Y., has signed up for the $500 experience, which allows her to live with a poor family for a week under the "Class Exchange Program." Her hostess is Romona Dias, 42, who lives in the Florence Heights housing project with seven of her children. An organizer for the program said he wants affluent people to see how unemployed people "budget their welfare check, food stamps, see when they run out, even when they budget to the bone."

Nicaraguans ask for understanding from North Americans

Managua, Nicaragua (MCC) — Ron Sider, who recently visited Nicaragua, reports that evangelical Christians here are "deeply disturbed by what they consider to be a highly distorted picture of their country in the United States."

Sider, evangelical author and lecturer whose trip was partially funded by Mennonite Central Committee Peace Section, toured Nicaragua with seven other North American evangelical leaders. Their visit was at the invitation of the Evangelical Committee for Aid Development (CEPAD), which represents Protestants in Nicaragua.

CEPAD had earlier protested to North American churches when reports surfaced that the United States had launched a massive campaign to destabilize and eventually remove Nicaragua's Sandinista government. *Newsweek* (Nov. 8, 1982) reported that the CIA provided funding for armed attacks in Nicaragua by former members of Somoza's National Guard. In a highly polarized situation the evangelical church in Nicaragua, which historically has had strong ties with North America, has had to struggle to find its identity.

Sider reports that while "Nicaragua today is not a utopia," most Nicaraguans claim that life is much better than life under Somoza. Government priorities under the Sandinistas have shifted from favoring a small wealthy minority to programs which "promote basic education, health care and an adequate food supply for the majority who are very poor," Sider says.

The church has been affected by society's new emphasis on aiding the poor. Thelma Pareira, who manages an evangelical radio station, says that evangelicals in Nicaragua are now concerned "not just with the soul but with integral growth." Rodolfo Fonseca, a Pentecostal, confessed that formerly he was not concerned for hungry people and injustice, but now the evangelicals have discovered Luke 4:16 and want to transform both the soul and the environment.

Is there religious freedom in Nicaragua? Sider observes that virtually everyone the group spoke with reported complete freedom of religion. "Joaquin Gato, a pastor in the Pentecostal Church of God, said he traveled all over the country and found full religious freedom everywhere. There is freedom to worship, to evangelize in public places and to distribute Christian literature freely. Even the U.S. ambassador flatly asserted that he has no fear that religious freedom would be threatened even in the long term."

The director of the Bible Societies in Nicaragua, Ignacio Hernandez, spoke of the rapid increase in Bible distribution,

Award-winning TV spot on peacemaking reissued

Harrisonburg, Va. (MBM) — "Another Way," a 60-second, award-winning TV spot first released in 1971, was reissued to stations in late January to impact the public discussion concerning prosecution of non-registrants, nuclear disarmament and increased military spending at the expense of social needs.

"The best counsel we have received from Mennonite peace advocates suggests that now is a good time to reissue this spot," says Kenneth J. Weaver, director of media ministries for the Mennonite Church.

He cites four reasons for releasing it now: (1) Several non-registrants are currently being prosecuted by the courts, including a Minnesota case involving a denial of federal grant money to a student who hasn't registered; (2) the first three non-registrant cases, especially the Mark Schmucker and Enten Eller cases, are still fresh in people's minds; (3) during January and February, stations are more apt to run public-service announcements; and (4) the spots will counterbalance the strong recruitment commercials being run by the Armed Forces.

The basic message of the spot — "If your son, like God's Son, takes another way to peace, will you understand?" — speaks to the current scene in a number of ways, Weaver notes.

Since the spot shows one father after another being torn away from his family to go to war, it nudges the viewer to think new thoughts about the way to peace.

Pastors who have interest in helping to place the spot on their local station should call Lois Hertzler to see if the station may have received the spot. Her number is 703/434-2026 (Harrisonburg, Va.).

The vigorous public debate over the recent reinstitution of the draft prompted leaders of the General Conference, MCC and Mennonite Board of Missions to plan some new TV spots to address the growing militarism of the times.

Funding was therefore sought for reproducing "Another Way" and for scripting and filming two new spots on peacemaking.

With help from the Showalter Foundation, the General Conference and Mennonite Church media offices are moving rapidly to release the two new spots in May to remind viewers that true security does not reside in military weapons but in love and forgiveness and reconciliation.

Delbert L. Gratz, professor of history at Bluffton (Ohio) College, will serve as keynote speaker at the fifth annual Genealogy Conference, sponsored by the Lancaster (Pa.) Mennonite Historical Society on March 26. Deadline for registration fees of $14 for LMHS members and $18 for non-members is March 12. This conference will feature European backgrounds and migration patterns as well as aids to genealogical research in the United States. Over 200 attended the conference in 1982.

Several peace organizations in West Germany have undertaken a new step in their witness for peace by adopting and promoting the New Abolitionist Covenant on atomic warfare. The organizations include the German Mennonite Peace Committee, Church and Peace, with whom Mennonite Central Committee has cooperative relations, as well as Christian Peace Service, *Aktion Sühnezeichen* (Action Reconciliation), Fellowship of Reconciliation and Christians for Disarmament.

Eastern Mennonite College, Harrisonburg, Va., will be the host campus for the 1983 Transcultural Seminar, designed for college students and mission and service workers. The seminar, to be held June 27-July 8, is jointly sponsored by Mennonite Central Committee, Akron, Pa.; Bethel College, North Newton, Kan.; Goshen (Ind.) College and EMC.

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some of it due to the government's successful literacy program. He reported that about 400,000 copies of the New Testament had been given to people who had just learned to read and appealed for help to fund an additional 400,000 that they want to distribute to other newly literate people.

In spite of reports that the government allows religious freedom and that the church is growing, Sider reports that tensions between the church and state during 1982 were troubling.

A few evangelicals waged a highly visible campaign in May and June declaring that the devastating spring floods were "God's judgment on atheistic Nicaragua." A charismatic evangelist from the United States, Morris Cerullo, had pamphlets distributed which claimed that Satanic activity in Nicaragua was stronger than ever. When Cerullo arrived in Nicaragua on the day of General Sandino's birthday celebration, the government refused to let him enter.

A Managua cathedral displays a large poster of General Sandino.

During late summer, tensions between the state and church escalated and a number of churches were taken over by unauthorized local popular organizations, Sider relates. Hostile slogans were painted on churches and the government newspaper, the *Barricada*, attacked all evangelicals as "sects."

CEPAD, which has good relations with the government, promptly protested the anti-church crackdown to the government. CEPAD also met with top government officials and demanded the return of church properties. Approximately 80 percent of evangelical groups, which claim to have 400,000 members in Nicaragua, participate in CEPAD, which was established under the leadership of Dr. Gustavo Parajon immediately after the earthquake in 1972. MCC, which has four workers in Nicaragua, also works directly with CEPAD.

In spite of tensions between the church and state, Sider reports that "very few evangelical leaders seemed hostile to the government. At the same time I sensed some uneasiness and fear on the part of a substantial number. Some worry about the presence of Cuban teachers, doctors, technicians and probably military advisors."

It is clear that the evangelical church in Nicaragua has been profoundly impacted by the revolution. Sider says, "One of their strong feelings was a deep feeling of being neglected and ignored by their evangelical brothers and sisters in the United States. Church delegations from the World Council of Churches and the National Council of Churches, they said, had come much earlier to listen to them, but evangelicals had not. They do not in any way demand that U.S. evangelicals agree with them, but they very much want us to come and listen to their problems, concerns and viewpoints."

North American
Mennonite
Youth Gathering

BETHLEHEM '83

- For youth from Mennonite and General Conference Mennonite churches.
- Scheduled for Aug. 1-7, 1983, at Lehigh University in Bethlehem.
- Registration will be limited to 2,000. Forms were to be mailed to congregations by Feb. 1.
- Cost for this week-long event will be $156, plus transportation.

If you have questions/suggestions — write or phone:

Jo Bontrager
Bethlehem '83 Youth Gathering
Box 1245
Elkhart, IN 46515-1245
219/294-7536

Prepared by

Commission on Education
General Conference
Mennonite Church
Box 347, Newton, KS 67114

Mennonite Press, Inc., has a new managerial team to replace Roger L. Williams, who resigned as manager of the press at the end of 1982. The board of directors appointed Dwight Deckert, an accountant for Mennonite Press since 1981, as office manager and Steve Rudiger, another MP employee, as plant manager. Williams, who served as manager since 1978, has accepted a new position at the printing plant at Kansas State University in Manhattan, Kan. Located in North Newton, Kan., the press is jointly owned by the General Conference and Bethel College. *The Mennonite* is among the publications to regularly roll off its presses.

Mennonites in Lancaster (Pa.) Conference churches spent the month of December filling grocery bags for needy people in nearby cities. By Dec. 18, the deadline date, church members had filled about 700 bags, 200 over the goal. Geneva Rufenacht of Eastern Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities coordinated the grocery sharing project. Of the total, 300 of the bags were taken to Mennonite churches in New York City, and 200 went to Mennonite churches in Philadelphia.

In mid-December, leaders of the Canadian Council of Churches and of the Lutheran, Anglican, Presbyterian, United and Catholic churches met with Prime Minister Trudeau and with P.C. leader Joe Clark and NDP leader Ed Broadbent to express their deep concern about the nuclear arms buildup and Canada's part in it. In a brief they said that the long-held deterrent principle whereby the West wanted to have sufficiently strong weapons systems so that if attacked it could retaliate was giving way to weapons systems like the MX and the Trident which "are intended to threaten Soviet land-based ICBMs with a first strike."

Maranatha School for the Deaf opens in Jamaica

St. Elizabeth, Jamaica (MCC) — After being closed for over two years, the Maranatha School for the Deaf reopened its doors last fall. The Jamaican Mennonite Church, Mennonite Central Committee, Virginia Mennonite Board of Missions, local Kiwanis and Rotary clubs and members of the deaf community combined efforts to refurbish the school.

There is an abnormally high incidence of deafness in the area, including 24 school-age children who have no educational opportunities other than Maranatha. This high incidence of deafness has been attributed to several recurrences of German measles, along with intermarriage among deaf persons. MCC worker Ron Braun, who serves on the Maranatha School board, reports that currently seven students attend classes.

Shernett Henry, a Jamaican teacher who has received training in deaf education at the Jamaican Teachers' College, also teaches "signing classes" in the community to encourage parents of the deaf to communicate with their children. "Considerable work is put into teaching standard signing since most deaf people in the St. Elizabeth area use a homemade dialect that severely hampers their ability to communicate outside their immediate area," comments Braun, who is originally from Winnipeg.

The part-time maintenance person at the school conducts Sunday worship services at Maranatha for approximately 12 deaf adults who attend regularly. He and his wife are deaf.

Braun writes that MCC and missions personnel "have worked more as 'facilitators' than originators. We have worked hard to bring together existing Jamaican resources so that neither MCC nor another expatriate organization would have to assume a place that was unnecessary. This project involved a great deal of work since we tried not to take over what did not need to be taken over."

Children at the Maranatha School

Senior pastor needed

Olivet Mennonite Church, 45 miles east of Vancouver in the Fraser Valley, is seeking a senior pastor. Duties can begin in 1983 or sometime in 1984.

Membership is 317, with an average worship attendance of about 400. The recently renovated sanctuary can seat over 600 people.

Current staff consists of an associate pastor, administrative secretary and part-time minister of music.

The person enquiring should have experience in overseeing a fairly large, growing congregation, be gifted in preaching and pastoral leadership, be supportive of conference and MCC endeavors, relate easily to board, committee and lay workers and be growth-oriented.

A competitive salary and benefits package is provided.

Enquiries should be directed to:
Walter Paetkau, chairman
Olivet Mennonite Church
2630 Langdon St.
Clearbrook, BC V2T 3L2
Phone 604/859-5192 (home);
859-7681 (office).

THE MIDDLE EAST

May 7-28,1983

Egypt — Cairo, Luxor
Israel — Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Capernaum, Nazareth, Qumran, Masada

Tour hosts:
David Schroeder, New Testament professor, CMBC; Gerald Gerbrandt, Old Testament professor, CMBC

This tour will study the land of Israel both as the setting of Jesus and the Old Testament, and as a land in the midst of conflict.

For more information, contact:
John Schroeder
Assiniboine Travel Service
219-818 Portage Ave.
Winnipeg, MB R3G 0N4
Phone 204/775-0271.

Librarian/bookstore manager

Swift Current Bible School is now receiving applications for the position of librarian/bookstore manager. This is a one-year position for the 1983-84 school year. The applicant must have experience in library work. Bookstore duties will include the ordering and receiving of stock, keeping the financial records and supervision.

Please send inquiries to:
David Ortis, principal
Box 1268
Swift Current, SK S9H 3X4.

April 24 has been designated "Evangelism/Church Planting Sunday" by the General Conference and the Conference of Mennonites in Canada, which are encouraging congregations to take stock of their ministry in these areas. Don Yoder, the GC secretary for church planting and evangelism, and Paul Boschman, the CMC's director of evangelism ministries, are preparing program suggestions and resource materials for that Sunday. The special observance was the suggestion of the GC church planting reference council, consisting of church planters from each of the U.S. districts and the CMC.

John Friesen (left), chairman of CMBC Publications, presents the first copy of Still in the Image *to Waldemar Janzen, the author (see first item, below).*

The Spokane (Wash.) Mennonite Fellowship sponsored a candlelight prayer service outside the gates of Fairchild Air Force Base in Spokane on Christmas Eve to mark the impending arrival of the air-launched Cruise missile at the base. The Dec. 24 service is being followed by weekly prayer vigils outside the gates, beginning Jan. 9.

RESOURCES

Still in the Image is a collection of 17 essays in biblical theology and anthropology written by Waldemar Janzen, professor of Old Testament at Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg. Published jointly by CMBC Publications and Faith and Life Press, *Still in the Image* sells for $10.95 (U.S.) and $12.95 (Canada).

The heritage committee of the General Conference is offering **Mennoniten-Geschichte und Literatur: Eine Buecherliste** for $1. Write: Heritage Committee, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, or Mennonite Heritage Centre, 600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, MB R3P 0M4.

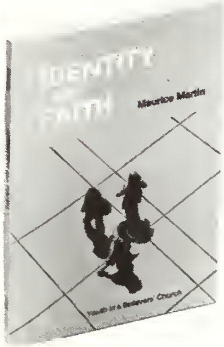
The December issue of the **MCC Peace Section Newsletter** is a special issue designed for peace education in the congregation. The material is not copyrighted and may be photocopied. Write: MCC Peace Section 21 S. 12th St., Akron, PA 17501.

Because of Love: MCC Grassroots Volunteers is a new filmstrip produced by Mennonite Central Committee that describes the efforts of the many people who are volunteers for locally based MCC activities. For information on this and other MCC audiovisuals, contact MCC, 21 S. 12th St., Akron, PA 17501, or MCC (Canada), 201-1483 Pembina Highway, Winnipeg, MB R3T 2C8.

A new filmstrip on the plight of El Salvadoran refugees who have fled into neighboring Honduras is available from Mennonite Central Committee audiovisual libraries on a free-loan basis. **Grave of an Unknown Salvadoran Refugee** tells of a church worker's first-hand encounter with the kind of terror the refugees face as they seek safety in Honduras. The film can serve as a companion to the MCC study resources "The Face of Change in Central America," designed for congregational or campus groups.

Something Meaningful for God, edited by C. J. Dyck, is a collection of 15 brief biographies of Mennonite Central Committee workers throughout the agency's history. Volume four of "The Mennonite Central Committee Story," edited by Cornelius J. Dyck with Robert S. Kreider and John A. Lapp, *Something Meaningful for God* is published by Herald Press and is available for $7.95 (U.S.) and $9.55 (Canada).

Something Meaningful for God



Identity and Faith by Maurice Martin, published by Herald Press at $3.95 (U.S.) and $4.75 (Canada), explores the meaning of baptism, communion and church membership from a Believers' Church perspective and in relation to the experience and participation of children and youth.

The Best Kept Secret — Sexual Abuse of Children by Florence Rush, with an introduction by Susan Brownmiller (McGraw-Hill Paperbacks, $5.95), probes sociology, religion and history to show that from time immemorial, adults have sought sexual gratification at the physical and psychological expense of minors with overt or tacit public approval. The author, a psychiatric social worker, won the Association for Women in Psychology's 1981 Distinguished Publishing Award for *The Best Kept Secret.*

Living Lightly: New Priorities for Home Economics explores issues raised by Doris Janzen Longacre's *Living More with Less.* Its 11 lessons include background materials and activity suggestions. It is available from MCC, 21 S. 12th St., Akron, PA 17501, and costs $2.

Also from MCC is a filmstrip, **Women in Development: The Neglected Key**, which explores the problems and potential of Third World women. Rental is free.

MCC U.S. Peace Section has put together a **War Tax Packet**, designed to equip individuals and groups with a variety of resources for study on the question of paying taxes for war. Cost is $2.

On its 20th anniversary, an organization that won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1977 reveals its achievements, failures and goals in **Amnesty International: The Human Rights Story** by Jonathan Power (McGraw-Hill, $9.95).

God's Managers, a budget guide and daily financial record for Christians by Ray and Lillian Bair, includes comments on basic principles of Christian stewardship as well as forms for recording monthly income and 16 categories of expenditures, plus monthly and annual summaries. It is published in a 8½ x 11 workbook format by Herald Press at $2.95 (U.S.) and $3.55 (Canada).

Look at the total picture

In his letter (Dec. 7 issue) Carl Epp expresses concern for "some of the medical realities of homosexual practice." His concern is commendable; his comments are marked by certain inaccuracies. From the letter content it is clear that he is referring to homosexual men, not homosexual women. Venereal disease has not been an important problem among homosexual women. This may be due to the lesbian community's support of long-term, committed relationships.

Venereal disease can be traced to the source of these diseases: promiscuity. From Epp's language it is clear that he perceives promiscuity as a specifically homosexual trait. Yet we only need to watch the media to see that promiscuity is common in our society regardless of sexual orientation.

When speaking of promiscuity among homosexual males, we must consider an important factor at work: the labels "deviant" and "perverted" applied to homosexual activity. Behavior considered socially or morally unacceptable is likely to be done furtively, since it can quickly threaten one with everything from loss of job to overt physical violence (which is not listed among Epp's concern for the homosexual person's health, even though it has been well documented). For this reason it has been safest for homosexual men to confine their sexual activities to short-term contacts. Having a committed relationship means being public — having a common address, spending holidays and free time with one's partner, etc. It also requires perceiving one's attraction for a same-sex partner not as deviant or perverted but as something positive which can provide the basis for a loving, long-term relationship.

Even when attitudes toward homosexuality were more severe than they are now there were homosexual men and women who could not accept their orientation as a sickness and developed long-term monogamous relationships. With greater acceptance, many gay men move away from promiscuity to search for a relationship of commitment. And many are successful. We have gay and lesbian members who have been together as partners for as long as 10 or 20 years. And we continue to work for the kind of climate in the church which would foster such long-term relationships, thereby averting promiscuity.

Furthermore, Epp's quote of the "so-called 'gay' people" as "unhappy" is problematic, since this is referring only to those who seek medical help. Homosexual people have special problems to face because of society's attitude, but they do not seem less happy than heterosexual persons. The situation cannot be understood by only examining those homosexuals who seek medical assistance — we must also examine the "healthy homosexuals." *Jim Martin for the Brethren/Mennonite Council for Gay Concerns (BMC), board of directors, Box 24060, Washington, DC 20024*

Jan. 7

Response to Carl H. Epp

With regard to the Carl H. Epp letter (Dec. 7 issue), my response is spurred by the misrepresentation he uses throughout his letter to arrive at the conclusion that homosexuality "is indeed contrary to created order. . . ." I am also distressed that the theory of "wholistic medicine" is misused to fragment instead of working toward wholeness on individual and collective levels.

Perhaps if Dr. Epp had been thorough enough to point out that heterosexual persons share most (if not all) the diseases he listed, and that the balance of the "most unhappy people seen in the clinic" are the heterosexuals, or "straight" people, he'd have reconsidered before mailing his letter.

Yes, I am "gay" (I agree that may be a misnomer for we suffer heartbreak and sadness — lack of wholeness — just like you "straights"). But we strive for wholeness. We seek the acceptance of our families, churches and communities. Some of us are becoming involved as openly gay individuals and couples. Thanksgiving dinner is shared with parents; offspring spend the holidays with Dad and his partner; social and spiritual events are shared with the local young adult fellowship.

Wholeness is coveted by most of us: wholeness of relationships which could supersede the need for promiscuous sex-getting, which in turn begets the spread of social diseases and undesired pregnancies; and wholensss which would allow you to trust me to be an individual as discerning and responsible as yourself, despite our difference in sexual orientation. Suggested reading: Scanzoni and Mollenkott, *Is the Homosexual my Neighbor?* (Harper and Row). *David Dutcher, 1097 S. Orange Grove Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90019*

Jan. 11

Needs more homework

The letter "Pastors and Salaries" (Dec. 21 issue) has earned the writer an F. It is obvious the student has not done his homework. Had this been an assignment in college English composition, he would have received an A. Sentence structure, vocabulary, grammar, punctuation are superb; but his nearly flawless English does not conceal his ignorance of the subject. At best it is the expression of prejudices couched in well-chosen words.

It was a serious question for me whether to honor this insulting letter with a reply or remain silent.

Incidentally, I have gained some experience in grading students' written work when I served as a classroom teacher, to supplement a low pastor's salary. An extended period of drought made it impossible during that time for my rural parishioners to provide adequate remuneration.

Let the readers be assured that if and when the writer of that letter submits a retraction of his unfounded statements, it will come forth in beautiful language. *Louis Goertz, pastor, Hutterthal Mennonite Church, Freeman, SD 57029*

Jan. 11

Thanks for ongoing witness

The Nov. 9 issue was most interesting. The article by Irene Klassen, "Memorize for Missions," was especially nostalgic for me — children beginning to memorize the Scripture. My dear grandmother would not allow me to go out to play with the neighborhood children until I had learned the 23rd Psalm, several verses in the Bible or one verse of "So Nimm denn Meine Hände" or "Befiehl du deine Wege" and other hymns. With tears streaming down my cheeks, I learned many wonderful old German hymns. I thought my grandmother was cruel, but today — 70 years or so later, I am grateful for this wealth of hymns and Scripture passages stored away. Children learn easily. One must encourage memory work; later they will appreciate it so much.

The same issue had several fine articles on China, including the reports of missionary children going back to their

LETTERS

birthplace. I too have had the privilege of returning to India where my father (the late P. A. Penner) began the General Conference work in 1900. Our mission homes are in disrepair, the old Christians are no more, but the work will go on. Anita Bohn in her article "God is Watering the Seed" says this seed is growing. I too feel the church is still very much alive, with our younger Christians carrying on the Lord's work — both in China and in India. We thank God for faithful ones, still witnessing and living for him. *Mrs. Herbert Schmidt, 413 E. 10th St., Newton, KS 67114* Jan. 11

Pastors' salaries and schools

I am concerned about two articles in the Nov. 16 issue. The first one is on "Contradictions" by Bill Wiebe. He mentions that Bethel College still accepts government grants and other government handouts. So what is wrong with that? I agree with his statement that it is time to re-evaluate our support to our conference and to our schools. But may I ask how many of our conference members give full support to our church colleges? Or do we prefer to give to colleges that beg for support on TV or to ministers of their own choices outside of our conference?

My second concern is about "Pastors and Salaries" by Jim Rupp. He raises the question about what the seminaries teach, "How to take advantage of or serve the church?" My suggestion is for him to go there and find out for himself. Their ministry entitles them to adequate salaries. We complain if we don't get a higher price on what we have to sell or get a higher paying job. We don't have to ask when or how we want to go on vacation. A pastor has to ask for a church to allow for a leave of absence, for only a short time. Even then, he may be called home for certain occasions that come up. Pastors are not their own bosses; they give their time to the church and have to ask for permission on what they are allowed to do, whereas you and I and everyone else can do as we please.

Mr. Rupp points out that they should rearrange their priorities to take away some of the financial burdens of the church and to count their many blessings. My suggestion is for all of us to rearrange our attitudes and be willing to compromise by giving up some of our luxuries that the pastors don't have and be willing to pay more, so that a preacher can stay and serve our church. If we all work together in harmony, I'm sure we will all receive a greater blessing. *Adina Schrag, Norwich, KS 67118* Jan. 11

Don't concede to criminals

A late response to "Christians and the Handgun Issue" (July 20, 1982, issue). Crime involves a deceived people in defiance of the laws that must govern, making it difficult to distinguish between right and wrong, moral and immoral values.

Reason indicates a breakdown in social structure through educated illiteracy is destroying the fundamental principles under which the U.S. republic has been blessed.

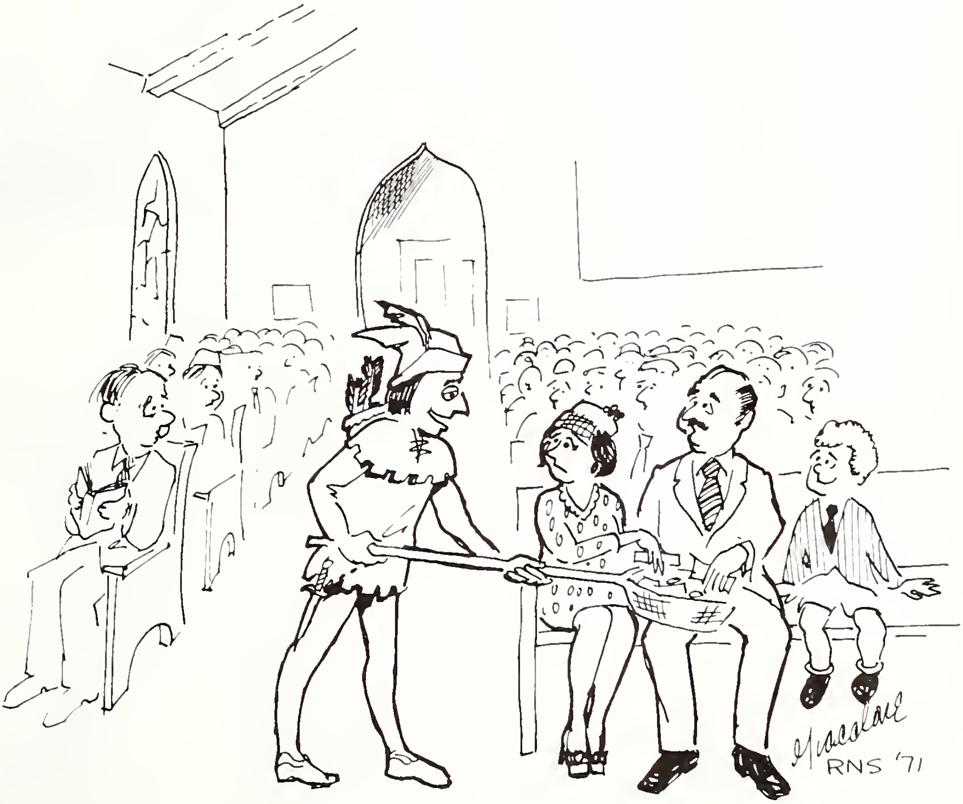
Gun control is a prime example that concedes to the criminal activity by those who support such discriminating points of view. It infringes upon the rights and liberties of our citizens to own firearms.

Imposing one restriction after another upon the people engaged in law enforcement is a mockery of our laws. And our Creator God — whence everything comes, including our laws — makes no exceptions. God has ordained government with the responsibility and authority to punish criminals, which includes the death penalty as a deterrent.

Many have taken upon themselves to discredit this concept and define it as murder. This couldn't be further from the truth.

William Blackstone greatly influenced the legal process. His whole thesis was that God is the source of all laws as found in the Scripture and the observable laws of nature.

Our republic was based upon the absolute laws of the Bible, rather than the changing whims of the people, which is so devastating to a sick and perhaps a dying nation. *Ollie O. Anderson, 704 W. Grand, Hillsboro, KS 67063* Jan. 17



THE ENTIRE COLLECTION GOES TO THE POOR THIS WEEK.

This pastor tends sheep and bees

Kendra Wyse

Watch out, Hilton, Sheraton and Holiday Inn! For nearly 25 years royalty and commoners alike have been swarming to one of nature's best innkeepers. Paul Goossen, pastor of the Eicher Emmanuel Mennonite Church near Wayland, Iowa, is the proprietor of an establishment that is a constant hive of activity. You will never see his guests lounging in the Jacuzzi or swinging a racket on the nearest tennis court. Instead, each inhabitant has a specific function to perform in order to help the proprietor keep the inn open for business. It is these functions that not only enable the guests but also the rest of the community to enjoy the sweet life. You see, Goossen's guests are really a mass of honeybees, and the inn is a complex unit of combs and colonies.

The foundation for the inn was laid many years ago, and only two tools were necessary for the groundbreaking . . . an aged man and two beehives. One afternoon as he was endorsing his goods, he came to the door of an elderly beekeeper who was eager to be rid of a number of his colonies. With a bit of persuasion, he talked the protesting young man into placing two hives in the trunk of his car. The first chance to test his slight knowledge of bees came when he reached his own driveway. It was a warm day, and when he lifted the trunk lid he was greeted by a quivering blanket of bodies covering the outside walls of the hives. His wife readily agreed that he was "surely in trouble now," but she lent him support by stitching a makeshift veil and gloves from an old curtain. With this protection he was finally able to transport the hives to a safe place.

Fortunately, this initial experience did not deter him from delving deeper into the world of these social insects. Today Goossen is a master beekeeper who enjoys all aspects of nature and is able to blend them together in his pastoral life. Many times this combination proves to be especially important to Goossen's effectiveness as a minister. He believes that "we as pastors tend to forget the types of problems people live with, so if we have something to do besides the ministry, it keeps our feet on the ground among humanity." For instance, an unfortunate crop failure among the bees gave him a clearer insight into the large-scale problems that could plague the farmers of his congregation.

A
HIVE
OF
BIBLE BEES
Bee Prayerful
Bee Cheerful
Bee Obedient
Bee Courteous
Bee Believing
Bee Faithful
Bee Honest
Bee Ready
Bee Kind
Bee Joyful
Bee Humble
Bee Content

Pastor Paul Goossen — busy as a bee? — working at helping bees produce a much-desired product — honey. At the same time, you can see Paul's interest in relating this hobby to his ministry. Among the "hive of Bible bees" are such characters as bee prayerful, bee courteous, bee honest, bee kind.

He believes there is an exciting spiritual *and* visual nourishment to be experienced from the natural landscape around us. Reflectively, he conveys his thoughts on the role nature should play in our Christian existence. He feels that the hand of God can be seen in nature at every turn, and as we gaze at trees, birds, animals or even inanimate objects like the ground and rocks, we see God the Creator reminding us that his hand is at work in the world.

Besides providing spiritual guidance for his congregation and lodging for thousands of bees, Goossen is also a key member of the Southeast Iowa Beekeepers Association and the Iowa Honey Producers. He has also been interviewed by *American Bee Journal*, the nation's leading publication for bee enthusiasts. His unique experiments regarding factors such as sunlight, temperature control and effective wintering of bees prompted the same magazine to publish several articles dealing with his findings.

From his roots in Kansas to his present home in Iowa, community activities have filled a sizable portion of his time. These activities include eight years as a volunteer ambulance driver, an instructor in the Central Pennsylvania Christian Training Institute and founder of the Southeast Iowa Christian Training School.

Even with all of these civic responsibilities, the proprietor of the *Noble Bee Inn* will never lock the door of his establishment. With a steadfast hand he will continue to lead his church and look after the needs of his winged guests, and perhaps one afternoon a young salesman will knock on his front door. . . .

Sabbatical in prison

Bert Lobe

Last Aug. 25, Esther and Dan Epp-Tiessen, MCC workers in the Philippines, and I visited Father Ed de la Torre, a 38-year-old priest in prison in Bago Bantay in Manila. His 65-year-old mother was with him. We were photographed and our conversation was recorded.

A priest of the Society of the Divine Word, Father Ed spent an initial 5½ years in prison (December 1974 through April 1980). He was released in April 1980 on the condition that he "go to Rome to study." After a few months in Europe and North America, he returned to the Philippines and was rearrested by military agents on April 22, 1982, for alleged support of leftist guerrillas involved in the armed struggle.

His arrest occurred while he was conducting sociotheological research for his postgraduate studies in Belgium, focusing on the reasons for people joining the resistance movement in the Philippines. The arrest was related to his involvement with the Christians for National Liberation, a group of activists which has attracted support from the lower echelons of society, some of whom have allegedly joined the armed struggle.

Bishop Francisco Claver, known internationally for his opposition to the martial law regime in the Philippines and a friend of the MCC workers in Mindanao, characterizes the relationship of the Catholic Church in the Philippines to the government as one of "critical collaboration." He describes the church as facing two forces of violence, one on the right (government) and one on the left (communist).

The church, Claver says, "has the power to transform the world, but not by the force of arms." He contrasted the approach of leftists which is to "endorse any means necessary to achieve certain ends," to the church's way. Ideology, he says, must never supercede faith. "We have to grope around, muddle around in faith." Father Ed says that "for our purposes the bond will be Christ, not ideology."

Father Ed's conversations with peasants in the early 1960s told him they were a suffering people, but also a people struggling against suffering. "That was important, because if people are only suffering, we only pity them. If you see only their struggle, you get scared. But if people suffer and struggle. . . ."

The church's response must be to help open the clenched fist and reach out the open hand; in that process is the struggle. Father Ed, in a homily, said, "We need to do two things. First, to change the open pleading hands to clenched fists of angry struggle. Second, to change competitive fists to open hands. . . . We need to do both. . . . One cannot happen without the other."

The squalid huts of squatters can be seen in many parts of Manila.

Father Ed continues, "In prison I took my commitment to be with the poor forever. I took my vows — obedience to a group that is obedient to the call of the people; creative participation, meaning that you don't just implement the decisions of others, but you also make suggestions and act as a subject; and thirdly, perseverance — keep struggling, that is."

The gospel in the Philippines is not preached without a price. Actions for justice and participation in social transformation have earned for church people harassment, torture, arrests, detentions and, for some, death.

The violence on the left is related to the government's lack of respect for human dignity, but it is in the final analysis no more acceptable than the violence of the right. While in Akron in early August, Bishop Claver commented, "While cutting off the head of the oppressor makes good sense from a human point of view, my inner faith, drawn from the teachings of Christ, holds me to another approach."

Reflecting on his own imprisonment, Father Ed says that to have a cleric in prison helps protect other prisoners and contributes to a feeling of oneness with others arrested on suspicion of subversion and fomenting rebellion but without formal charges. Says Father Ed, "The church can do so much more if one of their personnel is inside. One of the ecumenical challenges of our age is to make sure that every denomination at one time or another is represented in prison with people."

In an October 1981 address to Asian church leaders in India, Father Ed commented, "The first eucharist which Christ and his apostles celebrated happened on the night that he was to be arrested; it was a prearrest experience, celebrated in the face of crisis. The group was about to scatter. One would betray him. They would forget their vows to one another. They met and Christ once again tried to forge their commitment to bring them to remember their promises. The mass therefore provides for weakness; it is a time for remembering and it alternates with times of weakness, forgetting and scattering."

books

A briefer Bible

The Reader's Digest Bible, *Condensed from the Revised Standard Version Old and New Testaments, edited by Bruce M. Metzger (Reader's Digest Association, 1982)*

Reviewed by William Klassen, director of development, Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, BC V5A 1S6

No book has been edited, revised and translated as often as the Bible. Sooner or later it was inevitable that the editors of the *Reader's Digest* would try their hand at condensing this bestseller as well.

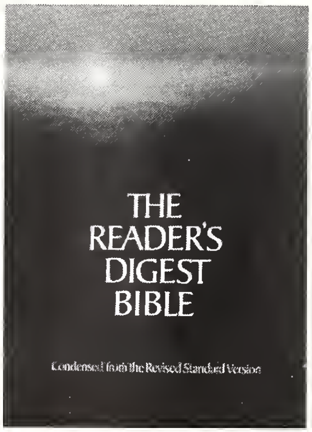
The first one to try his hand at it, Tatian, was branded a heretic in the second century, and his first condensation of the four Gospels into one was burned. Many people over the years and even today resent translators and other scholars "tampering" with the text of the Holy Scriptures.

The editors of this work desire their product to be "an irresistible invitation to draw closer to the spiritual heart of the greatest book mankind possesses." They have retained every book and claim that it "preserves every incident, personality and teaching of substance, and keeps as well the true essence and flavor of the language" (p. viii). They cite the renowned conservative scholar, Bruce Metzger, as saying that "nothing has been changed, nothing added to or removed from the text that in any way diminishes its spirit, its teachings or the familiar ring of its language" (Preface). Their work is not an abridgement of the text. It is rather a condensation.

On the whole the editors have done a commendable job of shortening the book by tightening the prose and removing redundancies. They have shortened it by about 40 percent; the Old Testament has been cut in half. Including the index, their text runs to about 800 pages. The RSV ran to 1,300 pages without an index. There is no question that they have achieved a greater degree of readability.

The price they have paid for this, however, is considerable. Of the 150 psalms, that most popular of all literary types for both Jews and Christians, 79 have disappeared. Unfortunately, some which were written by severely depressed or paranoid poets are removed and some which deal with vengeance and God as warrior are missing. The reviewer has no particular love for the missing psalms. They do, however, add an important dimension to our understanding of Hebrew religion. It is also noteworthy that depressed people have often found hope through these psalms. Unfortunately, psalms which provide a glimpse into Hebrew worship (such as litanies) also had to be sacrificed. In the New Testament sections are also missing, e.g. Matthew 13:3c-24b, which means that anyone reading only Matthew has no idea why Jesus taught in parables.

The index is useful, even if incomplete. Unfortunately, the editors see the Bible not as many books but as one book. In fairness to each author one should not delete from one author simply because it is found in another author. Each individual author is working purposely and presumably has already condensed his materials.


THE READER'S DIGEST BIBLE
Condensed from the Revised Standard Version

In this respect the book is a serious misrepresentation. It owes the writers of the various books of the Bible and their current readers an apology. The editors have violated the integrity of a literary work where they have left out blocks of material without indicating that this is done. The fact that similar material can be found elsewhere in the library is surely beside the point.

To be sure, the editors have taken a complex collection of books which is widely read as *one* book and made it easier to read by improving the prose at many points. Perhaps people who have found the whole all too intimidating will now be able to read the condensation and by doing so whet their appetites for the whole. In this form the Bible tastes a bit like a condensed soup.

Messages from God

Your Dreams: God's Neglected Gift, *by Herman Riffel (Chosen Books, 1982, 130 pages)*

Reviewed by Janice Pauls, Route 2, Box 78, McPherson, KS 67460

Even though we have recorded in the Bible numerous incidents of God using dreams as a means of communicating with his people, few persons today seriously consider that their dreams contain messages from God.

Herman Riffel paid little attention to his dreams until a series of incidents led him to begin analyzing them and then looking for concrete signs that God was really speaking to him in this way. In quoting experts on dreams, Riffel states that 95 percent of all dreams have something to say to dreamers about themselves. He emphasizes, however, that God does not speak only through dreams and that his message is always confirmed in other ways as well.

Your Dreams: God's Neglected Gift is a short book, easy to read, and contains interesting thoughts on the interpretation of dreams. Riffel stresses that dreams should be interpreted symbolically, not literally, and goes into detail on dream symbolism. He also attempts to keep his discussion biblical rather than delving too deeply into the psychological aspects of dream interpretation. The references to passages in the Bible dealing with dreams and visions are especially helpful.

"My experience, and that of many thousands of others," says Riffel, "is that God does speak to us through visions and dreams. Usually his message to us comes indirectly. On rare and special occasions, he appears and speaks to us directly in a vision or dream as he did to Abraham, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Daniel and countless thousands of average people down through the ages. His overall message is, 'I love you and I want to help you. Listen to me, obey me, follow me, and I will bless your life.' "

The author points out that many dreams defy interpretation and that not all of them can be considered as messages from God. The thrust of his book, however, is to encourage readers to give serious thought to dreams. In essence, he is saying that if you are open to God's leading in this way, your dreams may have something to say to you.

MEDITATION

God seeks us in our hiding

Hide-and-go-seek was a favorite childhood game. One of us was "it" while the others would hurry to find the best hiding places. Trying to be "home free" was the challenge of the game.

Today my friends and I still play hide-and-go-seek. We still try to be home free, but the players and the strategy are much more sophisticated. In relating to each other we often try to sneak past sources of conflict ("it" in the children's game) instead of working it out. Like the children we once were, we don't reveal our hiding places in case we may want to use them again. We have creatively built hiding places for ourselves, where "it" is least likely to find us. We find it much easier to hide behind the guise of busyness, a macho image or aloofness than to be open and to reveal our true selves to others. And if on occasion our hiding places are discovered, we seek new ones that are more secure and less visible.

Not only do we hide from each other, we often conveniently hide from God. We hide under the banner of religion and piety, but remain closed to a free and close relationship with God. Unfortunately for our game, God sees us crouching in our hiding places and calls us to come out.

"But the Lord God called to the man, and said to him, 'Where are you?' And he said, 'I heard the sound of thee in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself' " (Genesis 3:9, 10).

Brenda Suderman

What about the children?

What about the children,
You kingdom builders —
Assembling your lofty councils,
With your crafty press releases —
What about the children?
Can you expect them to believe your lies
As they crouch in bomb shelters
And jam sad little boats that flee your scenario's death?

How does your ideological pride weigh against their pain?
Do not your carefully chosen phrases ring hollow
When you defend your plans to expand your
Overflowing arsenals of death?
What about the children?
Do you care about them
As they cry and sob from Beirut to Belfast
Or run away with failing strength from the yellow rain of death
And are taught to eat the flesh of other children to survive?
You who are so mighty,
I have never even heard you raise the question,
What about the children?

Paul Davenport

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Julie M. Trnka reminds us that there's nothing more exciting than to be part of a congregation when the Holy Spirit starts to move a whole body. This issue features two "sobering" articles on what is currently the world's most abused drug — alcohol. Cal Redekop continues his provocative Bible and economics studies. A marriage alreday 75 years young, a pastor who tends sheep and bees, a priest in prison and a reminder of Bethlehem '83 make this issue full of inspirational, biblical and challenging reading.

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editorial

Get ready, get set . . . for Bethlehem '83

To date some people have ignored all references to Bethlehem '83. I spoke with one couple who had assumed this was about some meeting in Bethlehem, Israel. Since such a trip was out of their plans, they never got beyond the logo.

Aug. 1-7, Bethlehem '83, is history making. The GC Triennial Sessions and the MC General Assembly will meet on the same dates at Lehigh University, Bethlehem, Pa. There will be some separate business sessions, but most of that week will be in joint sessions.

Dutch Mennonites are reported to have resided in New Amsterdam (present New York) at least as early as 1643 (Smith, *The Story of the Mennonites*, 1950 ed., p. 529). So what's the fuss about 1983?

Well, there seems to be agreement that the first permanent Mennonite settlement was at Germantown (Pa.) in 1683. These settlers came from Krefeld, Germany — 35 in number. The 13 families were mostly Quakers, but were all of Mennonite descent; some members remained Mennonite (Wenger, *Glimpses of Mennonite History and Doctrine*, p. 101).

On this basis we are celebrating 300 years of Mennonite experience in America (actually 300 years in the United States; according to Epp's *Mennonites in Canada, 1786-1920*, "The first migration leading to permanent Mennonite community in Canada occurred in 1786. . ." (p. 56). I expect program planners to keep this in mind but also expect Canadians will be eager to learn more about our total history).

Bethlehem '83 will draw together the two largest Mennonite conferences from the United States and Canada. The MCs outnumber us GCs by over 80 percent (1981 — MC, 10,669 Canada; 99,651 U.S. = 110,320, *Mennonite Yearbook 1982*, p. 161; — GC, 24,234 Canada; 36,689 U.S. = 60,923, *Handbook of Information 1982-83*, pp. 107-108). Their history as a group precedes ours — one reason we often refer to them as "Old" Mennonite. Many GCs come out of the same tradition. But we GCs have a large Russian segment unique to our conference. To share with our older and larger sister denomination in Bethlehem '83 should be of interest to all on both sides.

We have much in common. Our roots go back to the same places in Switzerland and Holland (only in different proportions). Both of us like to point to the 1688 joint protest (Quakers and Mennonites) against slavery in the American colonies. The protest in 1688 declared, among other things, "Those who hold slaves are no better than Turks" (Estep, *The Anabaptist Story*, p. 198). Today we cooperate in the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, *Mennonite Hymnal*, *The Foundation Series*, MCC and many other efforts (some include other Mennonites, as well as Church of the Brethren and Brethren in Christ).

Mennonites are known for schisms, fragmentation and individualistic denominationalism more than most groups. This is partly understandable. Early pioneers of the Free Church tradition, we have historically promoted congregational autonomy. We have also advocated 460 years of non-resistance. Both are biblical teachings. But both have to be worked at much more carefully than alternatives of central leadership and unquestioned loyalty to the state. To be a "free church" means to depend on the disciplined spiritual commitment of all the members. We are free church as we together become mature in Christ. To be non-resistant means to exercise an alternative, creative way of channeling the normal human drive to self-preservation and domination.

History shows we have much to learn in both areas, not to mention many other parts of our common confession.

To me it is gratifying that the Holy Spirit is leading us to a common conference date. It isn't even requiring an extra session. Both groups were scheduled to convene in 1983.

Aug. 1-7 is fast approaching. Plans for your attendance are hopefully getting into gear.

This is not just another conference. It is a first in 300 years. Who knows when or if there will be another.

At the very least — if you cannot attend — pray for God's Spirit's guidance in all at Bethlehem '83. *Bernie Wiebe*

THE MENNONITE

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COE ISSUE

An essay:

The liberation of children

John Braun

Jesus took a small child and identified the kingdom of God with that child. In doing this, he cut through the futile nonsense of his disciples' ambitions for status in his kingdom. He also cut through our own double ethic which values adults more than children. The child was not used by Jesus to help us achieve greatness through childlike qualities. Indeed not. Jesus pointed to the child because, in fact, the greatest in the kingdom of heaven *is* the child.

The least in the community, those whose faith is tender and easily confused or thwarted, are the greatest. Whether they first venture to believe in Jesus as children or as adults, they risk stumbling, temptation, rejection and criticism. But mature faith starts with this risk. It is the doorway to the kingdom. Therefore Jesus and his heavenly Father identify themselves with the children and with those who, like children, need protection in their embryonic faith. They are the focus of the kingdom.

Contrary to Jesus' intentions, society generally treats children as the least important. They are the most likely to be victimized by warfare, calamity, greed, poverty, racism and the demise of family life. Through history they have been bartered, abandoned, sacrificed to gods, exploited for evil purposes and even consumed. They have little defense against the consequences of their parents' rebellion against God.

"You slaughtered my children" is the accusing response of God, enraged by the practices of child sacrifice in Ezekiel's time (Ezekiel 16:21). These children were first of all God's children. They were created for blessing, not for curse. Yet rebellion by their parents became their death warrant both physically, because they were the most vulnerable to the disastrous consequences of rebellion, and spiritually, because they were cut off from their lifeline to God through worship and the identity of being among God's obedient family.

But rebellion and its disastrous consequences, throughout creation, are not left to their own devices. From the call of Abraham to the present, God's activity in history has been guided by one persistent mission: to release the creation (and all of its children) from its bondage to destruction and to endow it with freedom, blessing and the identity of holiness. As the church identifies itself in mission with God's love for all people, it establishes itself and its children in the will of God for both present and future. The mission of liberating love is the divine lifestyle which gives the family of God its identity. Children first of all

"The child was not used by Jesus to help us achieve greatness through childlike qualities. Indeed not! Jesus pointed to the child because, in fact, the greatest in the kingdom of heaven is *the child."*

learn this lifestyle as its recipients when they are received openly and given priority care in the name of Jesus. Having been treated as the beloved of the Father and the greatest in the kingdom of heaven, they are prepared and freed to offer that privilege to others also.

That freedom, to share their privilege and identity in God's kingdom and purpose with others, is their anchor — and ours — and the gateway to the future. However, they are undermined by three idolatries which tend to arise among God's people. These are the idolatries of worship of self, worship of power and worship of Baal.

The *worship of self* is found in churches which turn their ministries and gifts inward, see themselves as the primary arena of God's saving acts and relax in the shelter and comfort of their own communities rather than agonize to release others for the fullness of God's love. Their children begin to believe that worship of self (self-enjoyment) equals worship of God.

The *idolatry of power* is the displacement of trust in God by political maneuverings, the adoption of world systems and the encouragement of violent means to accomplish the mission of society. But God alone is to be trusted as the source of the church's power. This power is spiritual (for protection and for victory over spiritual forces of evil) and inverse (loving enemies, servanthood, accepting poverty, etc). The church is called to abide humbly and obediently in covenant relationship with God and to trust God's action. It can teach trust in God to its children only as it lives by that trust in every circumstance.

"Contrary to Jesus' intentions, society generally treats children as the least important. They are the most likely to be victimized by warfare, calamity, greed, poverty, racism and the demise of family life."

Baal is the fertility god who was worshiped to keep the cycles of nature and the systems of life going. Both self-indulgent, pleasure-seeking living and the prayers of many Christians for the end times and escape to heaven represent Baal worship. In both cases the assumption is made that God is temporarily or permanently divorced from the creation. There is no future to believe in or die for on this earth. In the meantime, life in this God-less world is made as comfortable as possible, the squeaky joints are oiled to keep everyone content, and dollars and children are sacrificed to the ruling powers rather than challenge their ungodly authority. Children raised with this abandonment of the future are betrayed and are left unprepared to know the meaning and value of their own lives or to pick up the pieces left by their escapist parents.

Only by joining in God's compassion for people who are suffering and in bondage of any sort and by entrusting its faithfulness and its weaknesses into the hands of God can the church model its freedom and identity. Only then can it be sure that it has a heritage worthy of its children.

"Children are the focus of the kingdom, not a subspecies to be separated from vital participation in the faith living of the family of God."

Children are the focus of the kingdom, not a subspecies to be separated from vital participation in the faith living of the family of God. The awareness that they are God's beloved children, comes first of all by inclusion in the history, the vision, the mission, the worship and the confession of the church. Classroom teaching is strictly secondary. The trusting, vital faith living of the family and church provides the primary classroom. The children's hearts are the notebooks.

Ministry on behalf of the children, our own and those of all ages who need spiritual parenting, involves all of us in altering the structures and behaviors of society which undermine children and their families. This is the vital mission of liberation facing the church. It carries the promise of blessing from Jesus, for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven. •

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Education

Why Christian education?

Fostering conversation between the generations is the ongoing task of teaching and learning in the congregation.

Children need loving nurture by Christian parents, teachers and the Christian community. Youth need the challenge of home and church to make the faith their own, for if for some reason they do not choose the church at that time they may never become part of a Christian community. Young adults need times and places within the church to ask questions and search out answers about the faith. Adults need the resources of the Christian community through the many transitions and crises they face. Christian education at all age levels is important in order that people may have abundant life and that the church may be able to carry out the Great Commission.

The Commission on Education is working at Christian education in a number of ways.

COE tours

In the spring of 1981, COE staff, with the help of regional educators, made tours to all areas of the constituency to introduce and to interpret the newly published youth and adult *Foundation Series* curriculum and to reintroduce the children's section.

Foundation Series happenings

The Foundation Series curriculum for children, youth and adults is now in use. Resource people all over Canada and the United States are "servicing" the materials.

Anne Funk drops in on Sunday schools in British Columbia; she wants to help teachers who may be experiencing problems. Mark Yoder takes off two weeks and visits Sunday school superintendents in California and Arizona; he's there to answer questions and introduce new material. In the Northern District, Janelle Ortman organizes an all-day teacher-training workshop; she's good at making all kinds of arrangements. The good news is that each of the five districts and each of the five provinces has a *Foundation Series* resource person. And good things are happening everywhere.

The resource persons have copies of the curriculum and are able to check on specific questions and problems. They have information on training and supplementary materials like teachers' courses, intergenerational guides and supplements for mentally handicapped children. Teachers in the churches everywhere have someone they can turn to who is close by.

A curriculum supplement to *The Foundation Series* grades 3 and 4 teacher's guide has been developed. It is designed to help teachers "mainstream" handicapped children in the regular classroom. A teacher's training course to help educators understand and deal with the developmentally disabled person in the classroom will also be available in 1983. A 12-session adult study book will be published in 1983. The book, with accompanying leader's guide, will be suitable for use in Sunday school, midweek meetings or camp settings. A six-session youth curriculum piece is in the planning stage.

Project: Teach

During its 10-year history, Project: Teach, a one-week experience-based teacher training event, has touched about 750 participants and has involved 250 people in leadership.

The next Project: Teach is scheduled for Bethel College and Bethel College Mennonite Church for March 21-25. All participants meet jointly for Bible study, Anabaptist history and a variety of other subjects. For all other sessions, teachers will be grouped according to the age group of the students they are interested in teaching — all the way from nursery to grade 8 to youth and adults. Superintendents and pastors will also have their own classrooms.

The Foundation Series *curriculum is coming!*

Papers for children and youth

Each Sunday children in grades 1-4 get *Story Friends* to take home from Sunday school.

On the Line is published jointly by Mennonite Publishing House and the General Conference Mennonite Church for children in grades 5-8.

With, a magazine for youth, has pages of articles, photos, cartoons and stories for middle teens.

Work camps

Skid row in Portland. Underprivileged children in Philadelphia. Handicapped adults in Denver. A historic building to be renovated in Germantown. Camp counseling in Manitoba.

Add 38 high schoolers and seven leaders, mix them up for a few weeks during the summer, add some local resource persons, and you have a work camp.

"It is obvious that Work Camp 1982 had a vital Christian impact on all those involved," says Donovan Graber, last year's coordinator. High schoolers are invited to apply for Work Camp 1983. Travel assistance is available through COE.

1983 youth gathering

A North American Mennonite Youth Gathering is planned for Aug. 1-7 in connection with Bethlehem '83 at Lehigh University, Bethlehem, Pa.

The celebration of the 300th anniversary of the coming of the Mennonites to North America is the occasion for this first meeting of General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church youth — and their elders.

The Mennonite (ISSN 0025-9330) seeks to witness, teach, motivate and build the Christian fellowship within the context of Christian love and freedom under the guidance of the Scriptures and the Holy Spirit. It is published biweekly by the General Conference Mennonite Church, 722 Main St., Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Subscription rates: one year, $12 U.S., $13 Canada; two years, $22 U.S., $23.50 Canada; three years, $31 U.S., $33 Canada. Foreign subscriptions add 50 cents per year to U.S. rate. Second class postage paid at Newton, KS, and additional mailing offices. Printed in U.S.A. **POSTMASTER: Send Form 3579 to *The Mennonite*, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.**

Students and young adults

Mennonite students and young adults are increasingly locating in cities and on university campuses throughout Canada and the United States.

Each year more than 1,000 Mennonite students and young adults leave their home congregations for new surroundings. COE and Student and Young Adult Services (MC) maintain more than 100 contact persons in key urban and university locations. Yearly an "It Matters Where You Scatter" poster lists the contact persons who have agreed to "keep in touch" with students and young adults known to be in their area. The annual student and young adult census helps these contact persons locate and minister to our scattered young adults.

Many young adults remain or return to their home communities. As congregations affirm their gifts, these visionaries assume capable leadership roles. Many have received training in our church liberal arts and Bible colleges. Voluntary service and other church service programs are challenging young adults to a life of Christian service wherever there is need.

Perspective '84, a churchwide young adult conference, is being planned for Minneapolis, Feb. 16-19, 1984.

COE provides a Congregational Student Aid packet and bulletin insert to facilitate planning congregational student scholarships for members studying at our church schools. The last Sunday in August has been designated as Back to School Sunday to encourage congregational support of teachers and students in public and church schools. This fall a student devotional book, *A Reason to Sing*, will be available for congregations to share as a we-are-with-you gift to their college and university students going away to school.

Student and young adult leadership training is available through regional conferences, Mennonite Graduate Seminars and *Feedback*, a leadership resource newsletter. These joint COE/SYAS programs encourage people to exercise and use their leadership skills.

Most young adults desire to be part of the faithful people of God. Whether in their home congregations or in a new setting, they exemplify a searching and testing faith. As they question, COE joins hands with the broader church to provide the caring space and the positive direction young adults need for their faith development.

Faith development

Each era seems to have to write its own "pilgrim's progress." James Fowler and John Westerhoff are exploring the faith journey in our times. "How does faith affect the way people approach their life stages?" Kenneth Stokes wondered in 1979. The Religious Education Association, working cooperatively with about 20 denominational and educational groups (including the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church), is involved in a research project on Faith Development in the Adult Life Cycle.

A symposium to explore the research design, a Gallup Poll and in-depth interviews will result in a number of books which will be of help to teachers, pastors and counselors in the church.

The first book, *Faith Development in the Adult Life Cycle*, edited by Stokes (New York: Sadlier, 1982), has been published.

Watch for information on regional conferences. The project received a Schowalter grant of $1,700 to help put on a conference in Kansas.

Heritage

During 1983, the 300th anniversary of the coming of the Mennonites to America, the Commission on Education wants to help people reflect on the meaning of this history.

The Mennonite history contest encourages high school students to write papers on Mennonite history. There are prizes for the six best papers.

COE supports financially the Mennonite Experience in America project, which is working on four volumes of the history of Mennonites in North America.

The heritage committee is sponsoring tours to Bethlehem '83. Watch for information in your area.

A Schowalter grant of $4,500 will help to fund research and publication of 30 women's biographies. Readers are asked to send in suggestions of stories which should be written.

A Schowalter grant helps the heritage committee work on Mennonite history slide sets, a timeline and maps.

Two Mennonite history films, "Anabaptist Beginnings" and "Mennonites Come to North America," have been produced and are available for purchase from the Audiovisual Library, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.

Men's/women's roles

What is a Christian response to changing gender roles? To help congregations struggle with the issue, COE purchased a three-part film ("Male and Female — God Created Us"), plans to research and write 30 stories of women and is supporting the Women in Ministry conferences. The next is scheduled for Virginia in 1983.

Looking into the future

On March 23-25, 1982, 44 Christian educators met in Elkhart, Ind., to look into the past to get clues for Christian education in the future. Waldemar Janzen explored the Old Testament, George Brunk III the New Testament, Peter Erb the medieval period, Cornelius Dyck Anabaptism, and John Rogers and Rafael Falcon minority perspectives.

The papers are available in the Occasional Papers of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries in Elkhart.

A committee is refining the basic understandings which emerged from the consultation and is testing these in Christian education workshops and with congregations.

Family life

Family life committee

People have always known that there is nothing static about family living. However, our time, when families are subjected to much stress, especially as families break apart, presents a special challenge to the church to nurture healthy family living. The strengthening of family life is the major concern of COE's family life committee.

Preparation for marriage

There are several resources the family life committee is preparing for marriage preparation: a brochure on sex education materials which parents can use with their children; a course for teens on sexuality by Sue Goerzen, Hilda Enns and Lois Bergen; a premarriage manual and immediate postmarriage manual for pastors and others doing premarriage counseling by Sue Goerzen, Fred Unruh and Lois Bergen.

Marriage encounter

It takes work to create and maintain a happy marriage in today's world. Mennonite Marriage Encounter is one program of the church designed to help couples do just that.

ME is a distinct type of marriage enrichment program which uses lay couples as resource people. In contrast to many other programs, it is primarily a private experience between husband and wife and does not involve much group sharing or process. The weekend format begins at 7 p.m. on a Friday and is concluded by 5 p.m. on Sunday.

COE is now cosponsoring Marriage Encounter events with the Mennonite Church, going by invitation into any area in the United States and Canada. A group that wishes to cosponsor such an event may begin that process by contacting staff persons at Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, or calling 316/283-5100.

Parenting

What can congregations do to help parents in the awesome task of nurturing their children in the Christian faith and building strong Christian homes?

The Commission on Education is making books and study guides available on a loan basis to any person or group who wishes to use them. It also sends for a 10-day examination period a kit containing sample books on parenting.

The church family

John Gaeddert

I grew up on a family farm and appreciate that. I chose not to be a farmer myself, but I often wish every child could grow up on a family farm. I was included in the operation even with such menial tasks as gathering firewood for our heating and cooking stoves. I learned about growth — growth of wheat and oats, calves and chickens, and growth in myself. To get from gathering kindling to milking cows to driving the tractor to operating the combine represents increasing responsibility. Taking responsibility came as I observed parents and older sisters and brothers doing these tasks. We set goals; we had a mission. Selling cream and eggs, harvesting wheat and putting up alfalfa was done to keep the operation going and to make it possible for the children to go to college. We had to know at least a little about soils and horticulture, about animals and feeding, about mechanics and carpentry — these were everyday experiences.

I wish that same kind of experience for everyone in the church: a family church, a place where you know you are included, where others — adults and peers — grow up with you, a place where others care about how you're getting along in the faith. We need a place where we are asked the right questions as we grow up into the faith and struggle to make commitments to Christ and to others. We need a place where people know us well enough to give us responsibilities and even nudge us to do those things we didn't ever think we could do. It's important to know what's going on in the lives of others in the church — that's part of being a family. To be part of the mission of the congregation — to set goals and objectives — encourages identity. To be aware of the expenses a congregation has, to know what it costs to support conference programs and to have a good teaching program in the church is to be involved in stewardship.

The church is intergenerational. No matter what age we are, we all know we belong, and we know about how much can be expected of each of us as we grow up in the church together.

The church is a family — a family of God — where we are brothers and sisters to each other. There is something wholistic about teaching family style. It may be like eating family style — we eat the same food. The family needs to have things in common so common experiences can be shared and attitudes and values can be developed and carried on from generation to generation.

Worship

Worship with your whole being

John Rempel

Compared with the revolution in Roman Catholic worship, especially in its almost exclusive use of mid-20th-century music, Mennonite worship is surprisingly conservative. Every General Conference congregation I have visited still relies on *The Mennonite Hymnal* more than on any other collection of music in its worship of God.

After a spat of radical experiments in the late 1960s in which people tried to make worship relevant by omitting Scripture reading, praying or preaching, we have settled down to the more serious and demanding task of finding ways in which those irreplaceable elements of worship can express the thoughts and emotions of our day.

Enter the worship and the arts committee. By means of a series, in which 12 booklets have already been published, this committee tries to offer congregations resources to deepen the spirituality and creativity of worship. The first six booklets deal with the theology and practice of worship (e.g. baptism, marriage). Subsequent booklets concern themselves with specific elements of worship (e.g. prayer, music).

In the first booklet of the series, *Biblical and Theological Bases for Worship*, Walter Klaassen comments, "In a world in which there are no longer symbols and signs of spiritual reality . . . we need again to joyfully affirm all those elements in human life which help to create and nurture sensitivity to spiritual reality, such as music, beauty of line, form, color. . ." (p. 17).

Almost everywhere in the General Conference this statement would gain assent. The problem lies in *how* we use the "elements of human life" to point to God. For example, both drama and music can be merely entertaining and human-centered, depending on their context and content.

The worship and arts committee has tried to provide resources and guidance in these matters. As individuals and as a committee the worship and arts people have encouraged the inclusion of visual arts — from banners to sculptures — in worship.

To that end we and the (Old) Mennonite Commission on Congregational Worship and the Arts are planning a binational "worship event" for summer 1985. It is intended to bring into focus and under criticism all the innovation (or lack of it) in our worship during the upheavals of the past score of years.

There are at least three concerns I bring to worship and the arts. With the acceptance of choirs, Mennonites introduced a new dimension of worship. Worship was no longer carried out by only the minister and the whole congregation. We have great difficulty integrating choirs, other instrumental and vocal groups, and drama into the flow of worship. These groups are inserted randomly as — dare I say it — entertainment. (Else why do ministers so often say, "Thank you, choir, for the wonderful music"?)

My second concern is that we are unaware of both how our forebears worshiped (in the popular mind, "tradition" is that which a particular congregation has done for 25 years) and how the early church worshiped. Knowledge of both these sources is a prerequisite to all specific planning.

Third, we need to do further study of the Lord's Supper. Is it fundamentally a covenant meal focused on the death of Christ, which may be taken only when people are reconciled with God and their neighbors? Or is the Lord's Supper most importantly a declaration of Jesus' resurrection, of grace and acceptance?

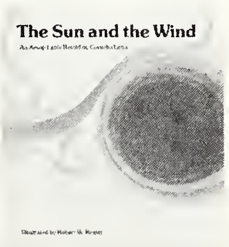
In everything we do to give form to our worship, may we be led into the awesome presence of God and into such an encounter with the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ that we can enter the world in joy and in strength to struggle for the kingdom.

Previews

Read what's coming

Elizabeth Yoder

The current year promises to be exciting for Faith and Life Press. On the list of forthcoming books for 1983 are a full-color children's picture book (the first ever for Faith and Life Press), a handbook for *The Mennonite Hymnal*, a history of home missions in the General Conference and a collection of mission and service stories by Cornelia Lehn.



The Sun and the Wind is an Aesop's fable adapted by Cornelia Lehn and illustrated by Bethel College art professor Robert W. Regier in vibrant transparent acrylics. Aesop's fable of the sun and the wind is a classic statement of the peace principle that love is stronger than force. The Commission on Education, in accepting this book for publication, hopes that it will be a witness to the wider community of the power of love and non-violence. The release date is set for March.

The new hymnal handbook, *Exploring the Mennonite Hymnal: Handbook*, will be released in May. Prepared by Alice Loewen, J. Harold Moyer and Mary Oyer, the new handbook is a companion piece to *Exploring The Mennonite Hymnal: Essays* which appeared in 1980. The *Handbook* has a brief entry on each hymn. It is cross-referenced to *Essays*, which treats some subjects, composers and hymns at greater length. Together they function as a complete reference work.

I Heard Good News Today is a collection of mission and service stories by Cornelia Lehn. Commissioned by Women in Mission, this book will be a treasure trove for any occasion that calls for a good story. The collection is divided into sections beginning with mission stories in the Bible and continuing country by country. It will be available in June.

Lois Barrett has written *The Vision and the Reality: A History of Home Missions in the General Conference Mennonite Church*, which is set for release in July. The book traces the home mission vision from the early days of the *Reiseprediger* (itinerant minister); the work with Cheyenne, Arapaho, Hopi and Metis people; the city mission work which was virtually abandoned when the flood of Mennonite immigrants to Canada began in the 1940s; down to the present. It is a fascinating story that tells both the shortcomings and the victories in this ministry.

COE news

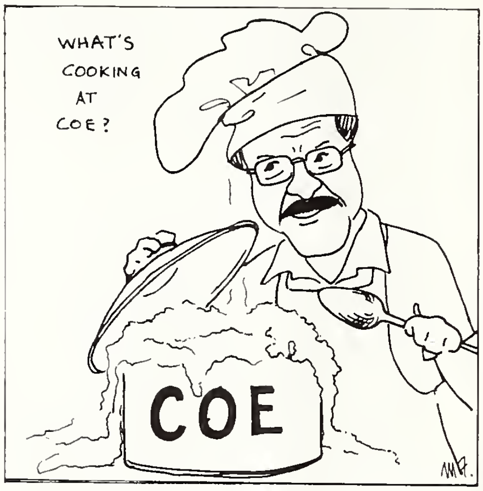
COE is getting a new interior design

Alice Suderman

Work continues on details within the proposed structural changes made by the Commission on Education at its August meeting. Plans are to finalize these changes at the Council of Commissions sessions in March. Implementation should take place in the months following, so that the transition will be complete when the next executive secretary assumes leadership at the beginning of the new triennium in August.

COE's service to congregations will continue in all areas as now, but the four departments of COE presently operating and composed mainly of commission members will be dissolved. Reference councils will be established to aid staff. Task forces will be set up to complete specific assignments. People chosen to serve on reference councils and task forces will be selected primarily on the basis of gifts, expertise and experience in the area of work assigned to that particular group, maintaining commission representation whenever possible. The two major areas of COE's work will continue to be those of publication and education, the latter including the advocacy role for our conference colleges and Bible schools as well as Christian education in the congregation and the home.

The purpose of the changes is to clarify lines of responsibility and to promote the cause of Christian education as efficiently and effectively as possible among our constituency.



Learning In The Church
Bertha Harder and Marlene Kropf
E STORY
PEAC
BE WITH YOU
Czars, Soviets & Mennonites
Still in the Image
The House at the Back of the Lot
Helen C. Coon
SARA'S TREK

The state of the COE economy

Ben Sprunger

Like many organizations, the Commission on Education finds itself in a situation of growing demand for services but little or no growth in available resources. Since 1972 the Commission on Education budget has increased by 212 percent. However, in constant dollars (when controlling for inflation), the COE budget has actually increased by 36 percent. The COE budget of $410,227 represents 8 percent of the total General Conference budget.

The work of COE falls into two general categories. The "programs and projects" category is represented by such activities as Project: Teach, servicing of *The Foundation Series* regionally, Marriage Encounter, parenting workshops, youth conference, work camps and young adult conference planning. Programs and projects are usually underwritten by conference budgets and rarely do these activities yield enough income to be self-supporting.

The other category is "publications." Since publications are purchased, many assume that the price charged covers expenses. However, in most cases, the purchase price includes only paper, printing and distribution costs. In order to keep printed materials affordable, author honorariums and editorial expenses are usually subsidized by the conference rather than added to the purchase price.

When examining the state of the economy, more is at stake than accuracy of the financial ledgers. (Outside auditors annually check the records.) Although records are important, what has been accomplished and what must be achieved in the future is the essence of any examination (a little like answering at the great judgment day). To that end COE is redirecting its limited resources to assist our people to have a greater understanding of the Bible, to aid in strengthening our families, to contribute to the vitality of the church fellowship and to help all of us become more effective disciples.

Of all General Conference work, COE is at the beginning. Its mission is clear. It is to care for the spiritual nurture and education of our people in the home, school, workplace and church. The application of resources, or lack thereof, and how they are used in education and publication will directly affect the future of the church and its spiritual health, witness and growth, perhaps more than any given division within the General Conference. Only if our faith as a people remains strong, and only if it is nurtured at all levels, can we authentically in Christ's name reach to those around us.

Using catch phrases of the past, the state of the economy of the Commission on Education can be described as "small but beautiful," and it does "more with less."

COE people

"We look up to our leaders," joked participants at the Aug. 10-13, 1982, COE meetings in Minneapolis as they saw **David Schroeder** rise into the air on a stack of their hands.

As a theologian he influenced *The Foundation Series for Children*. As professor and teacher he is often the quiet discerner of gifts whose perceptive remarks have life-changing influences on students. As a family man he champions multigenerational households. He and his wife, Mildred, live with children, grandchildren and — until his recent death — his father-in-law.

As one interested in justice, he is helping COE shape its approach to poverty/affluence education.

COE indeed holds in high esteem David's many contributions throughout the years.

Schroeder

Coon

Helen Coon has always enjoyed drawing and sculpting and "making things." In recent years she has come to be an artist with words as well; she has written articles, stories, verse and now a novel. *The House at the Back of the Lot* is a children's story about Ellen, a Mennonite girl growing up in a Chicago neighborhood in the early '40s.

Helen serves the Western District as *The Foundation Series* resource person.

When we talk about the "Wonder in Aliceland" we're talking about **Alice Suderman**, Mountain Lake, Minn. Besides her many duties at home, school, church and community, Alice is the capable chairperson of the Commission on Education.

Alice cares. She cares what happens in the teaching programs of congregations and that COE is accessible and provides resources to assist in those programs. She cares in a "wonder"-ful way that COE is doing in a practical way what needs doing in our conference and in Christian education. Aliceland will not be the same after she completes her term with COE in August.

Suderman

Gaeddert

With Osage orange chips flying, **John Gaeddert** shaped a beautiful wood sculpture as one of his many expressions of worship to God. In the past seven years John also chipped away at problems faced by a commission executive secretary, some of which were less malleable than Osage orange but which also yielded to his shaping. John has resigned his position effective this August.

He has given faithful and creative service to the church as pastor, Mennonite Central Committee director, director of admissions at Bethel College and (since 1975) executive secretary for COE.

John says that his plans after August are still indefinite.

Hundreds of hours of volunteer church work were already chalked up for **Marjorie Geissinger** before she was elected to the Commission on Education in 1975 to complete an unexpired term as Eastern District representative. That district has benefited from her gifts as editor of the *Messenger* for 14 years and as member of the education committee for nearly 20 years.

By profession Marjorie is a preschool and kindergarten teacher.

Since 1977 she has served as secretary of COE, a responsibility which will end this August when Marjorie completes her second term and is ineligible for reelection.

Geissinger

Hiebert

For 29 years **John Hiebert** has designed COE publications. Books, pamphlets, study materials, *The Mennonite* — all have a mark of distinction when John has given them their garb.

John started working at Mennonite Press on June 1, 1954 — three days after graduating from high school. In those days, John handled a job from beginning to end. He was the art department, the stripping department, the camera department and the pressman — all in one. He designed each publication, pasted it up, made plates and saw it through to the finish. Gradually, as the work increased, more people were hired to help. John now is swamped with design work only.

The fresh, creative and meaningful designs that come from John's gifted imagination and artistic hands are a vital part of the publications with which COE reaches out to readers all over the world.

Unrau

Helen Unrau is a builder. She does not build with bricks and mortar, although she has been known to give bricks to Sunday school teachers to remind them of their building task, but with young lives and love and a lot of know-how.

Helen left nursing to become Christian education director of the Bergthaler Mennonite Church in Altona, Man. As chairperson of the Manitoba educational resources committee she is involved in planning the annual Manitoba Sunday school convention. In 1982 she became *The Foundation Series* resource person for Manitoba, a job in which she works with the Commission on Education to help people when they have difficulties with the curriculum.

Bogota, Colombia — Jacob Tilitzky, pastor of the Eben-Ezer Mennonite Church in Clearbrook, B.C., and president of the General Conference, visited Bogota Jan. 15-17. During his brief visit, Tilitzky met with pastors and leaders of the Colombian Mennonite Church and visited rural areas such as La Mesa and Cachipay. He was the main speaker at the installation service of Angel Canon, who is replacing Antonio Arevalo as pastor of the Central Mennonite Church in Bogota.

The General Conference's Commission on Overseas Mission and Eastern Mennonite Board of Missions, Salunga, Pa., have agreed to contribute up to $160,000 for the purchase of a new facility for Mennonite Ministries in Hong Kong. Each of the two agencies will make up to $80,000 available. The agreement was made in response to requests from missionaries there for assistance in acquiring a new building to broaden their work and serve as their church center. Mennonites in Hong Kong have used rented quarters for carrying out their ministries for more than 25 years.

NEWS

CMC boards hear the 'good news' and 'bad news'

Winnipeg — Jake Fransen, chairperson of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada, opened the Feb. 2-5 annual council of boards with Acts 14:27: "On arriving there, they gathered the church together and reported all that God had done through them and how he had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles." Fransen suggested that Paul, a man of action, got things moving, but then took time to share and assess what God had done. Facing a heavy agenda but with the pleasant surprise of $60,000 in last-minute 1982 income above what had been expected earlier, the opening mood was buoyant.

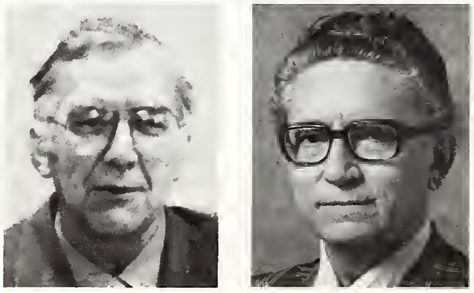
From the "good news" atmosphere beginning, the four days of many overtime meetings, hastily called special consultations and frequent "closed" sessions produced a vacillation between the "good news" and the "bad news."

Pieces of good news were numerous. The 1982 budget income of 96.5 percent was four percentage points ahead of what was projected in early December. Canadian Mennonite Bible College has a record student enrollment (175 full time and 55 part time). The theme (Christ Our Authority), place (Winnipeg's Grant Memorial Baptist Church, July 8-12) and speaker (Erland Waltner) for the 1983 annual conference are in place. The finance committee has prepared a three-year budgeting plan (projecting 8 percent increases annually but cutting budgets set earlier) that would put the CMC in a cash reserve position by 1986 instead of, as currently, carrying a $110,000 cumulative operational deficit. Native Ministries heard reports of local native initiatives — in the absence of outside workers — to run their own sunday school at Matheson Island and Manigotogan. Selkirk Christian Fellowship declared its readiness to assume full ownership of its church property and to continue as an incorporated body. People interested in becoming Native Ministries staff — now in training — show excellent potential. The new committee on ministerial leadership is taking an active role and tackling a volatile subject, "Involuntary Termination of Ministers," while the Winnipeg and Vancouver Chinese Mennonite churches are continuing their building expansions.

Yet the bad news items kept piling up. A 5 percent budget cut was implemented for 1983, with no money to respond to requests from several Native Ministries fields for full-time resident workers. CMBC was unable to continue its campus life coordinator position, nor to add a second staff member to the practical theology department. Conference staff will get only a $600 (versus earlier projections of $2,000) per person salary increase for 1983. For the first time in recent years one board (CMBC) openly disagreed with and voted against the final budget resolution at Saturday's closing session.

(Left to right) Vera Funk, C.N. Friesen and John Funk in NM sessions

Enns (left) and Epp: significant resignations



A sense of tension pervaded the sessions. Items not easily categorized, but also significant, were the resignations of Edward Enns, Congregational Resources Board executive secretary since 1975, and George K. Epp, CMBC president since 1978.

The CMBC board had the most difficulty with the finance committee's recommendations. The conflict between the board's responsibility to manage the affairs of the college generously and supportively, and its accountability to the General Board and its economic constraints, was keenly felt. The discussion at each session circled around this central, structural issue.

Bill Toews, chairperson, repeatedly pointed out the board's loss of power in

The next Project: Teach will be held on the campus of Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., March 21-25. Billed as "five days of experience-based learning for church school teachers (nursery to adult), superintendents and pastors," the week-long event aims at helping teachers acquire a basic understanding of children and adults and the teaching task, as well as exploring the pastor's role in the total Christian education program of the church. Interested individuals should contact either Herta Funk, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, or Miller Stayrook, Bethel College, North Newton, KS 67117.

Thanks to generous giving from constituent churches, the General Conference's Commission on Overseas Mission was able to meet its financial commitments to the relocation of Union Biblical Seminary in India one year earlier than expected. The commission had agreed in February 1981 to contribute an additional $45,000 to the project, over and above the $100,000 sent earlier. A total of $15,000 was sent in 1981, and because of generous contributions last year, a sum of $30,000 could be sent last year, fulfilling the commitment. UBS hopes to complete its move from Yavatmal to Pune, India, sometime this spring.

A midwestern snowstorm dumped more than 15 inches of snow on the Newton, Kan., area on Feb. 1 forcing the General Conference's central offices to close down for two days. It was the first time in 12 years that GC headquarters was shut down because of snow.

CMC Council of Boards in plenary session: good news and bad news

determining its own program and budget (its constitutional mandate) to the General Board and its finance committee. Gerd Bartel, finance committee representative, acknowledged the committee's interference in board matters (though within its constitutional right in reducing the conference-approved budget disbursements by 5 percent), but referred the matter consistently to the chairperson as a question of policy.

Since it was understood from the beginning that the finance committee would not be persuaded to increase its disbursements to the boards (despite the fact that conference receipts had been considerably larger than anticipated at the time of the 5 percent cut last December) because of its primary commitment to reducing the deficit, the problem faced by the CMBC board was how to meet its mandate with its hands tied, and further, how to effectively expose the structural dilemma to the General Board.

To this end, the CMBC board presented a motion to the plenary session Friday afternoon which proposed "that each board have authority to establish internally the allocations of proposed budgets, including salaries . . . after consultation with the other boards." It was tabled until the following day by the chairperson of the General Board, Jake Fransen, "to allow time for reflection by the general assembly prior to discussion." The motion was perceived generally as a direct challenge to the budget guidelines which had been proposed by the finance committee and the General Board. It was much more a structural challenge than a bid to increase salary allocations, since the CMBC budget leaves little room for juggling figures even given the opportunity. The effect of tabling the motion until the final plenary session, on the other hand, stymied the decision-making process of the college board's finance committee. The committee attempted further action by sending a motion to the General Board finance committee rejecting both the salary provisions and the proposed total CMBC disbursement budget. This motion was not accepted by the General Board finance committee.

By Saturday morning it was clear to the CMBC board that the motion to the plenary session had been counterproductive. The informal response from Native Ministries and Congregational Resources Board members had been negative. Although the two boards were in similar positions with regard to budget cuts, neither had a comparable program and salary problem, and some saw this as an attempt by the CMBC board to get a "larger slice of the pie."

In conclusion, the CMBC board moved to accept the 1983 revised budget "under duress," to refer its tabled motion to the General Board for further discussion and to request "a comprehensive review of all aspects of our financial situation and process with the view of establishing more helpful and workable procedures."

Two task forces reported to the General Board — one in education and one on the future of the CRB. The former recommended a new council of education with its own staff. For the CRB, along with affirming existing programs, a much stronger emphasis on "service ministries" (peace and social concerns?) was urged also with its own staff. GB accepted both reports and will guide their follow-up.

In a pattern similar to development of the General Conference level, the CMC General Board — initially set up to be a coordinating, planning and guiding board — continues adding program. It is now responsible for *Umsiedler* ministries, ministerial leadership, communications and archives — a total 1983 operating budget of $404,500 (larger than either Native Ministries or the CRB). A large portion of the GB budget is self-generating, and its program not necessarily comparable to NM, CRB or CMBC.

GB, which at first had ideas of appointing a fund raiser, came to the final plenary with a proposal that all elected members become part of visitation teams to CMC churches during 1983.

The 1983 budget of $2,348,000, which called for church donations of $1,439,000, was passed by a 34 to 9 vote. A large majority seemed enthusiastic and optimistic, but the hesitant minority stayed by their reservations. *from reports by Bernie Wiebe and Di Brandt*

New Creation Fellowship of Newton, Kan., celebrated its 10th anniversary on Feb. 3 in a special service that included a brief summary of the origins of NCF, sharing from everyone about where they were 10 years earlier and how they heard of the church, and communion. New Creation is an intentional community that began in February 1973. It joined the General Conference in 1980.

The on-again, off-again trial and sentencing dates for Charles Epp and Kendal Warkentine, respectively, the two General Conference young men being prosecuted for failing to register for the draft, are on again. Federal courts in Wichita, Kan., have been shuffling the dates every few days. The most recent tentative schedules call for the trial of Epp on April 5 at 9:30 a.m. and for Warkentine to be sentenced on March 7 at 1:30 p.m. In the meantime, both men are continuing their studies at Bethel College in North Newton, Kan.

The name of the Overseas Mission Training Center on the campus of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Ind., was changed in late 1982 to Mission Training Center. MTC is cosponsored by AMBS, Mennonite Board of Missions in Elkhart and the Commission on Overseas Mission. The MTC coordinating committee decided on the name change at a meeting last fall, reasoning that the word "overseas" often leads to a misunderstanding of mission. "It perpetuates the idea that mission is from the West or Christendom to the rest of the world," said COM personnel secretary John Sommer.

MCC juxtaposes current program reductions with

Harrisonburg, Va. (MCC) — The Mennonite Central Committee annual meeting held here Jan. 28-29 was carried on amid the warm hospitality of Shenandoah Valley Mennonites.

The annual meeting's discussions centered on two contrasting issues — the current reduction and possible future expansion of MCC program. The board approved immediate plans to slightly reduce overseas programs in 1983 to keep a balanced budget, while setting long-term plans to develop some large-scale MCC programs.

Immediate reductions, holding the 1983 cash budget to $12.6 million, the same level as last year's expenditures but over $1 million less than field askings, were reluctantly approved by the board, which clearly would have preferred encouraging more growth to meet increasing world needs.

MCC treasurer Norman Shenk said allowing program expansion was not advisable if MCC "does not experience stronger giving in the next year." But he added, "The church has not yet begun to sacrifice to put forth Christian ministries. We need to practice stewardship in spite of a problem economy."

While the MCC cash budget for overseas work will not increase in 1983, the overall MCC budget, $22.5 million, is up from the 1982 total, largely due to increased amounts of material aid MCC anticipates sending overseas in 1983 and the continued growth in the SELFHELP Crafts program.

Robert Kreider addresses a Civilian Public Service reunion dinner.

The tight cash budget will mean cuts in askings for programs in Central America, Southeast Asia, India and Bangladesh. Some programs, such as most of the Middle East program, were left essentially unchanged. The tight budget situation does mean that there will be fewer dollars to respond to new needs in any continent.

Board desire to do more to meet human needs was seen in the discussion on the report of the committee to study expansion of MCC operations with government development funds. The committee's six-page report affirmed the present style of MCC program, while recommending that MCC "is encouraged to explore the possibility of a few specially designed development projects where its substantial people resources could utilize large-scale, long-term governmental or foundation funding."

The report followed more than a year of discussion on the issue, in which many maintained that in light of world needs MCC should be doing far more to ease human suffering, and others maintained that MCC should generally limit its work to small-scale, people-intensive projects that do not require large amounts of non-constituent funding.

The committee's recommendation was accepted, but only after vigorous discussion of the proposal. Lamar Fretz of Ontario, MCC member representing the Brethren in Christ, talked about the difference between Canadian and U.S. perspectives on government. While U.S. constituents hesitate at involvement with government, many Canadians see use of government funds for church work as part of their stewardship responsibility.

Fretz, whose motion at the 1981 MCC (Canada) annual meeting had been the impetus for establishing a committee to

St. Louis — Word was received here recently by Fern Hieb that Eduardo Calderon of Guatemala City was killed in early January. Calderon and his wife, Sachiyo, have resided there for the past 14 years. They were students at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., in the late 1960s. Fern Hieb, a college friend of the Calderons, reported that no reason was given for Eduardo's death in a Jan. 17 letter from Sachiyo. Hieb said, however, that it appears that his political involvement led to his death.

An evangelist from Manitoba has been invited to West Germany for nine weeks to serve Mennonite congregations which have members who came from the Soviet Union during the past decade. Peter and Margaret Harms of Killarney, Man., left for Europe Jan. 14 to lead renewal services in nine congregations which have *Umsiedler* members. The Conference of Mennonites in Canada is sponsoring the Harms on this assignment.

A record 665,747 babies were born to unwed mothers in 1980 in the United States, says a new government report. Out-of-wedlock births in 1980, the latest year for which figures were available, accounted for 18.4 percent of the 3.6 million total births that year, said the National Center for Health Statistics, an agency of the Department of Health and Human Services. The main reason for the 11.4 percent increase, the report said, was "the substantial rise in the rate for unmarried white women."

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ure expansion

Edgar Stoesz, MCC associate executive secretary, reports to the annual meeting. Beside him is Lamar Fretz of Ontario.

study expansion, noted that in general, Canadians are more open to using large amounts of government resources. The BIC representative said he was "wistful that MCC fails to be the full channel it could be."

There was general agreement to take seriously the hesitancy by field staff to accept large infusions of money into existing programs. Members talked in terms of one or a few "test cases" where larger amounts of government funds could be used for specific large projects such as forestation, road building or refugee resettlement.

Reports from overseas were a moving part of the two-day meetings. Latin American secretary Herman Bontrager reported that despite claims of improvements in human rights, some 7,000 civilians died in violence in El Salvador in 1982. Ten percent of the population of the five Central American countries are refugees or displaced.

Asked how workers keep a sense of hope in this situation, Bontrager responded, "When people are willing to keep working to help others despite fear for their lives, the least we can do is keep on helping them."

Supporting the church was the theme of a report by MCC Zaire representative Renton Amell. He talked of the gnawing feeling of hopelessness in that country, which is plagued by corruption, continuing poverty and dependence on outside resources. "By working alongside church members we are saying that we care about them," he said.

Paul Myers related a story from Egypt, a country experiencing sectarian tension. In a fall meeting with Myers, Coptic Orthodox Bishop Athanasius of Cairo urged that in these times "we need to take time to worship and pray together, not just to talk about projects."

Earl Martin, recently returned from the Philippines, described how groups of religious people there gather for prayer and Bible study as they seek to discern how to respond to violence against the poor in that country. "We do few visible projects in the Philippines," Martin said. Rather "we seek there to be a ministry for peace."

Other reports received were on the fall flooding in India and Vietnam, MCC involvement in the inter-Mennonite China Educational Exchange and continuing assistance to refugees. Major new groups of refugees are in Central America and the Horn of Africa, with large numbers continuing in Pakistan and the Middle East. MCC aids refugees in 18 countries through projects including emergency food aid, loans, tools, housing and resettlement.

There was enthusiasm for the growing SELFHELP Crafts program. In 1982 SELFHELP purchased products from overseas artisans worth $2 million, up 41 percent from the amount purchased in 1981. Growth in this program has increased at about 40 percent for each of the past four years.

New members elected to the executive committee were Joe Neufeld of Regina, representing MCC (Canada), and Lamar Fretz of Stevensville, Ont., Brethren in Christ.

Marie Wiens of Hillsboro, Kan., Paul Quiring of Reedley, Calif., and Florence Driedger of Regina were re-elected to the MCC board as members-at-large.

The board, which meets yearly, is made up of 37 members, representing conference groups, MCC (Canada) and MCC's regional groups. A 12-member executive committee meets four times yearly to give guidance to the ongoing program. *Kristina Mast Burnett*

District and provincial conference ministers met in Newton, Kan., Dec. 9-11, 1982 (right). They are from left (standing): Dietrich Rempel (British Columbia), David Braun (Alberta), Mark Weidner (Central), David Hillegas (Eastern), Frank Keller (Western), Ernie Neufeld (Northern), Peter Janzen (Ontario), Elmer Friesen (Pacific); (seated): John Wiebe (Manitoba), Ed Enns (Congregational Resources Board) and Jacob T. Friesen (Ministerial Leadership Services).

The MCC Central States annual meeting will be held March 19 at the Hillsboro (Kan.) Mennonite Brethren Church. The meeting will feature a presentation of major issues of 1983 by Edgar Stoesz, associate executive secretary of Mennonite Central Committee, plus interest groups, regional activities of the past year and an update on registration and the draft by Jim Amstutz, MCC draft/peace counselor.

MCC (Canada) adopts restraint-oriented budget, program

Saskatoon (Meetinghouse) — A cautious approach to the future marked the annual meeting of the Mennonite Central Committee (Canada) here Jan. 20-22 as the 31-member board gathered to celebrate the agency's 20th anniversary.

Concerned about a possible downturn in giving during difficult economic times, the board adopted a restraint-oriented budget and steered clear of starting any major new programs.

The result, commented one veteran board member, was a meeting that took "a closer look" at more programs than has been the case in previous years.

Seated at tables shaped into a rough oval in the sanctuary of the Nutana Park Mennonite Church, the board members probed behind the budgets and reports in a review of the direction of the sprawling MCC (Canada) program. Surrounding the board, as if to symbolize the larger Mennonite and Brethren in Christ family from 12 different conferences, were ranks of chairs filled with over 100 observers, staff members and visitors.

Before them on the platform at the front of the church was set a blackboard with a continuing reminder of MCC's mandate. There worship leader Peter J. Dyck had written in large chalk letters the words of Micah 6:8, the text of his three messages. The requirement to "seek justice, love kindness and walk humbly with your God" sums up what MCC is all about, he said.

Treasurer Paul Peters introduced the cautionary tone early in the two-day meeting when he explained the twists and turns of the budget-setting process for 1983. Despite the facts of economic recession, the MCC (Canada) income figures had "looked unbelievably good" in September, he said. On that basis, a preliminary 1983 budget was shaped with some optimism. The MCC (Canada) executive then reported gratefully on the healthy financial situation — only to see giving plummet in the final quarter of 1982. As a result, a new budget was prepared with the expected increase in giving in 1983 pared back to 5 percent.

The final budget retained the 5 percent increase and totaled just under $13 million. The funds will come from a variety of sources, including constituency giving (about 35 percent), matching government grants (about 42 percent) and money generated by programs like voluntary service and SELFHELP Crafts.

The restricted budget meant that several new ideas were shelved or postponed. A plan to appoint a development education coordinator was tabled and funding for several minor programs was made subject to the budget being met.

In other actions, the board approved a statement on "a service response" to the "problem of abortion," ratified the appointment of David Worth as a half-time director of Victim-Offender Ministries, and decided to write off a major chunk of a loan to an impoverished Mennonite colony in Mexico. (A huge devaluation of the Mexican peso had made it impossible for them to fully repay the loan.)

The statement on abortion was prepared at the urging of the Canadian Mennonite Brethren Conference and opened the way for MCC (Canada) to make responses to abortion a priority in its voluntary service progam. The statement was shaped by positions taken by the individual Mennonite conferences in Canada. Dave Redekop, moderator of the MB conference, said he felt the direction was a good one but added that an even stronger condemnation of abortion would be in order. "We in the MB conference approve what you're doing [with the abortion statement]. We'd only like you to go further."

During the report of the overseas service department, the board heard from Paul Peters, Stephen Lee and John Wieler on their recent trip to China. They had been appointed to investigate possible MCC (Canada) contacts in that country.

Although it is one of the smallest departments within MCC (Canada), the Native Concerns office continues to generate a lot of controversy. After director Menno Wiebe had explained some of the MCC work in resource development, in planting gardens on reserves and in supporting native peoples in some of their concerns for justice, he was told by a new board member that the program was "not very popular" with the constituency. Wiebe replied that "how to do it and to have our constituency behind us is a daily agony."

Despite the questions, strong support for the program was generally evident. The board agreed unanimously to send the prime minister a telegram asking him to allow full native participation in upcoming constitutional talks on native rights in the new constitution.

The Food Bank also came in for close scrutiny. After being nurtured under MCC (Canada)'s umbrella for several years, the Food Bank is slowly evolving into an interchurch agency operating on a much larger scale. The board examined the details of the proposed expansion and cautioned that MCC (Canada) should carefully explain what is happening to avoid misunderstandings. *Allan Siebert*

Pastor needed

A pastor is needed to serve in the Emmaus Mennonite Church of Wymark, Sask. Duties to commence Sept. 1, 1983.

Please contact:
Fred Heese
Box 25
Wymark, SK S0N 2Y0.

For the first time, the Roman Catholic bishops of East Germany have taken a stand publicly opposing the increasing militarism of their nation's communist government. In a pastoral letter read in all Catholic churches in that country, the bishops condemned the government's attitudes on disarmament and nuclear weapons, describing any war in which these might be used as "immoral" in every case. They also attacked new regulations increasing military training for German youth, urging the authorities to reconsider the whole concept of such training in school.

In response to the MCC U.S. "Resolution on Domestic Needs," MCC Central States with the MCC Kansas Hunger Concerns Committee is sponsoring a grocery sharing project. To help residents of the Central States region aid their hungry neighbors, empty grocery bags with a list of contents printed on the side and the MCC logo are being given to churches in the region. Churches and individuals all over the Central States have filled nearly 500 grocery bags and given them to their needy neighbors.

Twenty-three General Conference pastors and spouses as well as several lay persons registered for one of four regular courses taught at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries in Elkhart, Ind., during the January interterm Jan. 4-21. Course offerings included "Pastoral Epistles" by Erland Waltner, "Old Testament Images and Liberation Theology" by LaVerne Rutschman, "Anabaptist History and Theology" by C. J. Dyck and "Evangelistic Strategy" by John Driver, Art McPhee and Kenneth Bauman.

U.S. congregations called to address local poverty issues

Harrisonburg, Va. — Mennonite Central Committee U.S. board members reviewed the work of 1982 and looked ahead to the needs and challenges of 1983 during their annual meeting here Jan. 27 at the meetinghouse of Lindale Mennonite Church.

Mindful of the biblical imperative to "remember the poor" and "feed the hungry, house the homeless and clothe the naked," they searched for ways to respond to increasing poverty across the United States. Noted Wilmer Heisey, executive secretary, "How do we, the powerful wealthy, minister with integrity among the powerless poor?"

Presently 105 MCC personnel are working in 16 units across the United States, directly serving those in need and working to bring about changes in systems that exploit the poor.

Carlos Neuschwander of the MCC U.S. Immigration and Refugee Program spoke of the continuing influx of immigrants from Central America and their needs for protection and sanctuary. In light of the number of refugees still awaiting sponsors, Don Sensenig urged that in 1983 each congregation sponsor at least one refugee.

Pleas Broaddus reported about needs among minority youth in urban communities and the two MCC U.S. programs, IMPACT and Urban Community Development Summer Service, which have been implemented in response.

After hearing these reports, the board passed a resolution on domestic needs that calls on Mennonite and Brethren in Christ congregations and conferences to address local poverty. The document asks staff and church members to directly serve those in need by setting up food pantries and other similar projects. It also calls on staff and church members to create new structures that would help the poor to become self-reliant, to provide employment opportunities and to work at discovering and overcoming long-term causes of poverty and injustice.

Paul Landis (left), chairman, and Wilmer Heisey, executive secretary of MCC U.S.

U.S. Peace Section staff reported that in 1982 they spent major time responding to proposed alternative service regulations for conscientious objectors. "Nuclear war is the chief moral issue of our time," noted John Stoner, executive director of MCC U.S. Peace Section. "Therefore we plan to spend more time in 1983 on alternatives to the arms race. It's like feeding the hungry — we know we cannot do it all but we must do what we can."

John Hostetler, director of material aid, reported that in 1982 MCC shipped 9.7 million pounds of material aid to 32 countries. Most of the aid is shipped overseas, but each year an increasing number of requests come from organizations serving the poor of the United States.

SELFHELP director Paul Leatherman reported that 1982 SELFHELP sales in the United States totaled $1.7 million. Fifty-four percent of these sales was through MCC-related shops. Noted Leatherman, "We feel good about this growth, since 48.5 cents of each sales dollar goes to the producer."

Board members approved the 1983 MCC U.S. budget totaling $2.1 million, virtually the same as 1982 budget. Staff anticipates expanding several voluntary service units and the Urban Ministries program. This budget will require a 5.3 percent increase in contributions from the U.S. constituency.

Charmayne Denlinger Brubaker

Minister needed

Position of leading minister available at **First United Mennonite Church, Vancouver**. Must be bilingual.

Respond to:
Victor Dyck, chairman
3320 Phillips Ave.
Burnaby, BC V5A 2W7
Phone 604/420-5469.

A Mennonite church in Philippi? Some people in Philippi, W.V., have expressed interest in beginning a General Conference congregation. Lois Harder, a resident of Philippi, made contact with David Habegger, the conference's secretary for congregational life, who expressed his support for the group in a Dec. 13, 1982, letter. It was not, however, called a "letter to the Philippians."

Canadians are the world's happiest and most satisfied people, according to a Gallup Poll. Part of a worldwide study of values and beliefs, the poll found that Canadians are extremely content with their lives. There were 95 percent rating their level of satisfaction at eight or more on a scale of 10 — the highest of 19 countries surveyed. It found that Americans are the most patriotic, proudest of their country and most willing to fight for it; Italians are the most religious but the loneliest; and the French are most unhappy with their jobs. The results show the average Canadian is purposeful, comfort-oriented, gregarious and values family life, said professor Maurice Chagnon of the University of Ottawa. Canadians, however, are a smug lot. The survey found 87 percent saying they wouldn't steal but believe 70 percent of their neighbors are thieves. The study confirmed Canadians as law-abiding, as 84 percent expressed much confidence in the police, the churches (69 percent), the education and legal systems (65 and 63 percent) and the armed forces (58 percent). They were less confident about government workers (49 percent), the press (44 percent), Parliament (42 percent) and labor unions (33 percent). *Jim Fox,* The Canadian Report

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Hopes for inter-Mennonite unity resurface in Ontario

Waterloo, Ont. — Celebrating 10 years of work under a common umbrella, delegates to the annual Inter-Mennonite Conference (Ontario) sessions here Feb. 12 found themselves wrestling with the old phantom of interdenominational unity again, as they heard reports on church planting, pastoral training and other joint projects. IMC consists of the Mennonite Conference of Ontario and Quebec, the Western Ontario Mennonite Conference (both Mennonite Church) and the Conference of United Mennonite Churches of Ontario (General Conference).

Hubert Schwartzentruber, hired by IMC last year as a quarter-time church planter, invoked the spirit of unity early during the sessions, when he explained the dilemma of emerging congregations in discerning their conference affiliations. "The young people of today cannot see much sense in the fragmentation of our denominations," he said. "We must hand to the next generation a much cleaner platter of inter-Mennonite relationships. The old wineskins could break and spill the new wine." Schwartzentruber is cultivating the growth of a number of new fellowships, including those at Oshawa, Kingston, Mississauga and North Bay.

Brian Laverty, chairperson of IMC's Mission and Service Board, raised other questions about whether more of the intraprovincial mission projects being conducted by the three conferences could be amalgamated.

These two reports set off considerable discussion about previous attempts by IMC to foster greater unity among constituent bodies, including an elaborate amalgamation study that was effectively tabled two years ago. Glenn Brubacher, pastor of Kitchener's First Mennonite Church, suggested that "there are really two issues here — concern for new fellowships and amalgamation — and they should be dealt with separately."

With that, delegates passed an executive committee motion that it "explore the implications of having emerging congregations become members of IMC only, and not also one or more of the present conferences."

Delegates heard other reports from Conrad Grebel College, the Inter-Mennonite Board of Congregational Resources and IMC's Pastoral Leadership Training Board. A budget of $248,473 was approved for 1983, while discussions are continuing with the Mennonite Brethren Conference of Ontario about the possibility of shifting the provincial Choice Books operation from IMC to MCC (Ontario) to allow for greater MB participation.

Joe Nighswander, MCOQ moderator, reported that the IMC resolution of last year to begin a Bible school in the province was stalled by his conference because of tight budgets and questions about sufficient interest. An interim committee will do more preliminary planning, especially in light of the changing role of CGC's school of adult studies. *Larry Cornies*

Historical outline of the Inter-Mennonite Conference

The Inter-Mennonite Conference (Ontario), which held its 10th annual sessions at the Waterloo-Kitchener United Mennonite Church on Feb. 12, was born on Jan. 22, 1974, when an Inter-Mennonite Executive Council was formed, consisting of representatives from the Mennonite Conference of Ontario, the Western Ontario Mennonite Conference and the Conference of United Mennonite Churches of Ontario.

The council's formation came at a meeting of conference representatives at the MCC (Ontario) offices in Kitchener. Delegates to the 1973 annual sessions of each of the three groups had given assent to the new body's formation.

The council elected Emerson McDowell, moderator of the MCO, as its first chairman. Other executive positions were filled by Edward Enns, then pastor at the St. Catharines United Mennonite Church, who served as vice chairman, and Wilmer Martin, Tavistock, who served as secretary-treasurer.

The council called the first delegate meeting of the new inter-Mennonite organization for May 11, when 175 delegates representing 12,000 Mennonites in the province gathered at Rockway Mennonite School in Kitchener. This first meeting produced some tensions as much of the discussion revolved around questions of structure and authority, rather than on inter-Mennonite cooperation. Yet by the time the day was over, delegates had covenanted to move ahead together and authorized a budget of $67,200, which included support for an Inter-Mennonite Mission and Service Board, an Inter-Mennonite Board of Congregational Resources and Conrad Grebel College. The Inter-Mennonite Pastoral Leadership Training Board was added several years later.

Delegates took a major step on Jan. 14, 1978, when they agreed to ask their conferences to "consider amalgamation as a goal to be achieved within the next five years." After four years of intensive and sometimes emotional debate, however, the plan was turned down because it was considered premature.

Three days that didn't exactly shake the world

David E. Hostetler

I came home from the Mennonite Central Committee meetings in Harrisonburg, Va., as I so often do from other gatherings, with a briefcase full of notes, handouts and dockets — and a head full of impressions. Two sets of meetings were organized back to back: MCC U.S. and MCC international, as I'll call it, in a sequence preceded by the MCC (Canada) meetings held a week earlier. Included in these were items from the Peace Section, which sometimes appears to have a life of its own. Then there were related activities such as the Civilian Public Service reunion, a public honors ceremony sponsored by the Mennonite Mental Health Services, and other public meetings. All of this is reported in greater detail on pages 108-111.

The first thing that strikes an observer from the above is that there are now effectively three interrelated MCCs: the original MCC, MCC (Canada) and MCC U.S. Each of the latter two is subdivided into provincial or regional units as, for example, MCC (Ontario) in Canada or MCC West Coast in the United States.

All of this can be confusing. But in essence it follows the "Jethro principle" found in the Old Testament, which is to subdivide the work so that it can be more easily managed and made more productive. Lurking somewhere in the back of my mind is the thought that fund raising may have something to do with the structures too.

The political causes and effects, both external and internal, are too complex to assess here. But when strong national organizations become powerful symbols for unity of purpose in service, or when a national organization receives unprecedented amounts of money or grain for international programs, the U.S. based headquarters could feel a bit unprepared or even threatened by the philosophical and practical implications it generates.

These considerations notwithstanding, MCC in all its facets is a dynamic institution. Its stock in trade is volunteerism fueled mainly by young people — if not young in age, young in spirit. A quiet intensity and enthusiasm pervades the business sessions, the spaces between and the public meetings. Most of the reports have to do with the world's hot spots, because that's where the most oppression, exploitation and poverty run hand in hand. Christians whose primary goal is to serve such people cannot be indifferent about these matters.

(Left to right) Marie Wiens, Stan Bohn, Paul Landis and Joe Neufeld at the annual meeting

But there is a danger. As young people and administrators become aware of the evils perpetrated by unjust structures or causes such as the fabrication and deployment of nuclear weapons, they are tempted to become doctrinaire in their attitudes. That is, they tend to become ideologically committed. In a morning devotional, Calvin Shenk of Eastern Mennonite College warned against the tendency.

"Ideology," he said, "can survive without compassion, but prophecy cannot." Prophecy grows from agony, or anguish, and compassion. Without these it withers. Ideology can become cold and heartless and lead to cynicism.

Yet as one college professor said to me during a recess, "This is us." What I think he meant was that the combination of service and witness incarnated in MCC is essentially Mennonite. MCC may not found churches directly, but it directly or indirectly builds up the broader body of Christ.

Perhaps MCC internationalizes participating churches in a way that none of the strictly denominational agencies does simply because of its interdenominational supply of workers, its binational support base and its widespread multinational involvements.

In one coffee-break circle, five persons cited five examples from five different countries to illustrate what they were saying. It is this internationalized vision of the church, also strongly fed by the various denominational missions and service agencies, that will help church members avoid the pitfalls of an anti-Christian nationalism.

MCC brings home people who have been sensitized to the debilitating effects of poverty brought on by national and international political and economic abuses — people who understand the desperation of the hopeless and who can never again be the same.

MCC constituents owe it to themselves to learn what MCC, the organization, is up to. It's doing a lot of good in a pretty dark world. Most of the workers are highly Christ-centered in their motivation. But there are hints of cynicism here and there and occasional discouragement. There are small signs of petty and advanced politics going on within and among the various components of the organization. Yet despite its limitations and foibles, MCC is packing a powerful wallop against natural and human disasters.

If it's true, as I said at the outset, that the annual meetings were "three days that didn't exactly shake the world," I believe there's still enough power in MCC-type organizations to make a tremendous difference.

David E. Hostetler is news editor for Gospel Herald *and wrote this report for Meetinghouse.*

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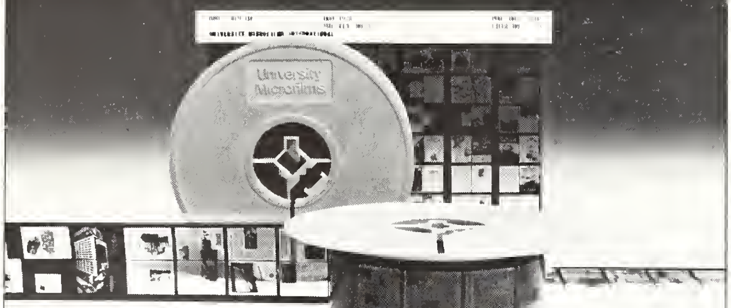

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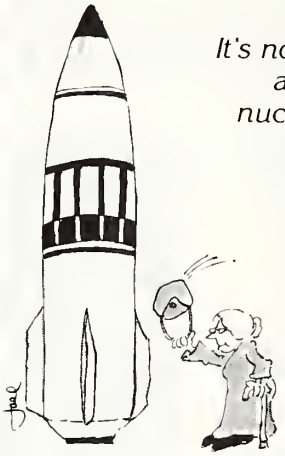

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Drama in India churches

I read *The Mennonite* and find very good articles in it. I also give the magazine to others.

Last Christmas we staged a drama where 2,000 non-Christians were present. The name of the play was "The Savior" (Muktidata), written by me. Makeup and costumes were arranged by my wife. I am sending a few photographs of the drama. The young people are interested in drama, film and singing, but we cannot work as much as we'd like in this area. *Theodore Roberts, nursery, Korba, M.P. India 495677* Jan. 24

We'd like to meet you

We are formerly of Middlebury, Ind., and members of Pleasant Oaks Church there. We now attend Cherokee United Methodist Mission here.

We would like to hear from Mennonites (there are none here but us), particularly those in churches close enough to us that we might worship and visit. We've heard of a Mennonite fellowship in Knoxville, Tenn.

The people in our church here wish us to invite you to worship with us when you visit the Great Smoky Mountains National Park and the Qualla Boundary (reservation of the Eastern Band of the Cherokees). *Bob and Joyce Rupert, Route 1, Box 63B, Cherokee, NC 28719* Jan. 27

Let's take another step

I was particularly drawn to the draft registration/non-registration articles (Dec. 7 and 21, 1982, issues), being a former teenage non-registrant myself.

A short while after I came to Canada, a friend (in response to a noxious letter I had written) said that perhaps my motivation for dodging the draft was more political than spiritual.

Putting my spiritual and political beliefs into the proverbial nutshell and applying the cracker, out popped the realization that my essential motivation was personal in nature.

That is one of the many important things Ted Koontz was saying. Some people register and some people don't. We desperately need to find something better to do with our differences than to bicker, convert and accuse.

When young men and women (and boys and girls) struggle with decisions that directly concern basic feelings and beliefs about living and dying, it is an opportunity for all concerned to understand some of the meaning in another's life and to re-examine one's own life. *Mark Sommer, 1056 Highland Road W., Kitchener, ON N2G 3W7* Jan. 25

More on homosexuality

Thanks for Jim Martin's response (Feb. 15 issue) to my letter in the Dec. 7, 1982, issue on homosexual issues, pointing out areas that would tend toward prejudice and discrimination. I did not mean to imply that promiscuity among heterosexuals is less prevalent or less problematic than among homosexuals.

However, back to the basis of concern, which prompted my first letter. There is a growing awareness in medical circles about the prevalence of a spectrum of diseases found largely in sexually active homosexual men. These diseases are collectively referred to as "acquired immune deficiency syndrome" (AIDS) and are not the same as venereal diseases like syphilis and gonorrhea, which are equally prevalent in promiscuous homosexuals or heterosexuals. The purpose was to point out the gravity of AIDS, which have a mortality rate of over 50 percent.

Martin suggests that the source of AIDS can be traced to promiscuity. Although promiscuity would definitely accelerate the prevalence, the medical profession is not yet ready to make that conclusion. *The American College of Physicians Observer* of Oct. 2, 1982, states that "the cause of immune failure is not known, but a virus is suspected. Toxic agents have also been investigated . . . and sperm itself, which has immunosuppressant properties."

Another study cited in the *New England Medical Journal, 1982*, 307 (12) points out, "The finding of a detectable abnormality in over 80 percent of those (homosexuals) tested suggests a greater public health problem than is generally appreciated." Until the etiology of AIDS is clearly understood, it seems appropriate to draw attention to its growing prevalence. Also, information to date would indicate that homosexual men are a high risk group. I thought it important to have medical consideration included in discussions on sexuality, and sincerely hope this dialogue can be helpful to all concerned. *Carl H. Epp, M.D., Mennonite Christian Hospital, Meilun Hualien 950, Taiwan* Jan. 31

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My expectations and hopes for Bethlehem '83

Work more effectively

As members of both the General Conference and the Mennonite Church, we will find it a satisfying experience to be part of two conferences of like minds meeting together this summer. Both groups bring a common Anabaptist heritage and vision to all the work of the church and in many cases have already developed unique approaches to the areas that concern us all: congregation building, social concerns, missions and education. I trust that in cooperation with each other and in learning to know each other better, we will be able to work more effectively for the kingdom of God. *Helen Kruger, 131 Forest Hill Drive, Kitchener, ON N2M 4G4, Mennonite Biblical Seminary board, member of Stirling Avenue Church*

Kruger

Buhr

Heighten awareness

A leading criticism of the Mennonite experience is that it is divided among so many groups. Any move, therefore, to bring large groups of Mennonites together to heighten their awareness of each other's Christian experience must have great value. I hope that we continue to talk to each other to appreciate how much we have in common and how valuable our individual perceptions of the gospel are. *Lorne Buhr, 716 Knottwood Road S., Edmonton, AB T6K 1W5, legislative librarian, member of First Church*

God's agenda

I hope this conference will be a time to celebrate our history as Mennonites in America and a confirmation of our common foundation and roots. I hope this will also provide a context for us to evaluate our present relationship within the conference and with other conferences and begin to set some new directions for the agenda God calls us to in the next generation. I hope we will not get so weighted down by structural and new ways of cooperation that we miss the vision of what God wants us to do and be in the years ahead. *Marvin Zehr, 4129 Maplecrest Road, Fort Wayne, IN 46815, pastor of Maplewood Church*

Zehr

Gingerich

Closer relationships

Bethlehem '83 promises a lot of excitement for me. I see the conference as a homecoming/reunion event. We come together recognizing our common roots and celebrating our common heritage. Since I have grown up and attended colleges and seminary in the Mennonite Church, and having served for 23 years as a GC pastor, people will make this conference meaningful for me.

I'm expecting this conference to result in some good fellowship, sharing of our Mennonite heritage and meaningful worship. While a merger institutionally seems a long way down the road, our being together should be a positive step in developing closer working relationships with each other. *James Gingerich, Box 66, Moundridge, KS 67107, pastor, First Church of Christian*

Look at sharing

Our roots are mutual. Let us cooperate to re-emphasize "living under the cross" and making the Scripture central to our discernings and decisions, whatever the cost. This is especially needed in the area of peace, now that nuclear testing may be coming to Canada, but also in the area of relating to those immediately around us. The recession in general and unemployment in particular are creating a need for us to take a new look at sharing our possessions and abilities on a more one-to-one basis. *Kathy Peters, Route 2, Didsbury, AB T0M 0W0, homemaker, member of the Bergthal Church*

More celebration

I look forward to the greatest celebration of Mennonites since the world conference in Wichita. We will celebrate our history, our togetherness and our common faith. In spite of the hardships, frustrations and great issues that face Mennonites at this time, I hope that we as a conference will be able to concentrate more heavily on celebration than we have in previous conferences. *Lawrence Voth, director of development and financial affairs, Bethel College, North Newton, KS 67117*

Voth

Tschetter

Learn God's directions

I hope that Bethlehem '83 will help us cope with one of our greatest needs. "Polls consistently show the abysmal ignorance of Christian people regarding the most elementary aspects of biblical knowledge and doctrine" (Kenneth S. Kantzer editorial: "A Christian Education Worthy of the Name," *Christianity Today*, Nov. 12, 1982, p. 23). Assuming that what is true of the general Christian public is also true of us Mennonites, we need to ask ourselves some basic questions. If we are a biblically ignorant people, can we justly claim to be the children of the Anabaptists? How can we hope to cope with life's issues (be they social or spiritual) in an adequate way if we as a people are ignorant of the elementary truths of Scripture? How can we expect God to bless our efforts if we are guilty of ignoring his directions? *Richard Tschetter, pastor, First Mennonite Church, Pretty Prairie, KS 67570*

We are special people on a special planet

Ken Peterson

How special is our planet? Is planet Earth the only sphere inhabited by life? Among the 200 billion billion stars of our 10 billion galaxies, are there other planets with intelligent life?

In December 1981 a delegation of scientists met in Estonia to compare notes and urge humanity on with a quest known as SETI — "the search for extraterrestrial intelligence." There have been many false alarms regarding extraterrestrial life. The most famous was in 1968, when regularly spaced pulses were heard coming every 1⅓ seconds from a point in the sky. This turned out to be the discovery of pulsars, the long-sought neutron stars predicted by physicists. For a few weeks, however, excited scientists thought such precise pulses might be coming from "little green men" on some distant planet. After searching for intelligent signals from about 1,000 stars, the official verdict is still that the human race is unique in our universe.

We are special. We live on a special planet, capable of housing intelligent life. Our planet earth is exactly the right distance from the sun, so that it gets neither too hot nor too cold for us to live, as it does on other planets. Our sun is constantly in movement, as is the earth, and yet we stay the same comfortable distance from this needed source of life and light. The earth rotates at exactly the right speed to provide the correct length of day and night for organic life. The climate on the earth is ideal for the existence of humanity. The atmosphere and gravity are just right. There is plenty of water and sunlight, with all kinds of trees, plants, flowers and animals, fish and birds to provide a variety of food, clothing, shelter and beauty. There are minerals and metals of every kind for our happiness and welfare.

A basic specialty about our planet is its atmosphere. In Genesis 1:6 God said, "Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters." This firmament is the atmosphere, which divides the waters of the clouds above from the waters of the ocean below. Our atmosphere and waters came from the earth exhaling vast amounts of gases and water vapor as the primitive earth was forming. The early atmosphere included a blanket of clouds covering the earth, giving a greenhouse effect, with little oxygen in the atmosphere. Vast amounts of vegetation were produced by the greenhouse effect, and through the process of photosynthesis, great amounts of oxygen were released into the atmosphere.

Our atmosphere is a perfect balance of various gases, making earth just right for the existence of human life. Most living things must have water and oxygen or they will die, and earth has plenty of both. The atmosphere is a mixture of 78 percent nitrogen and 21 percent oxygen, with 1 percent other gases. The earth is the only planet in our solar system with a large amount of oxygen in its atmosphere — to support life.

Our atmosphere helps protect us from the harmful ultraviolet rays of the sun and shields us from the meteors which would otherwise pound our planet from outer space. With its particles of dust, the atmosphere makes possible the formation of raindrops, snow and hail, which distribute water all over the earth, washing valuable substances down to fertilize the soil.

Water is evaporated from the seas into the atmosphere by our warm sun. The clouds above the atmosphere are then pushed by the winds over seas and lands. It rains (or snows) fresh water upon humans, beasts and plants to quench thirst. Mountains, like huge icehouses, hold the precious snow crystals, and then the snow melts by the sun and waters the crops. So the cycle within the atmosphere continually promotes life on this special planet, Earth.

The air we breathe to live, the water we drink, the food we eat to nourish life, and this earth we race through space upon to house our life — these are all gifts of God Who is Life. Take a deep breath of air. Live by the gift of our special atmosphere. Live to the full by breathing in the Spirit of the Living God. For in God we live and move and have our very being. Live in the atmosphere of God and know life in abundance. *Third in a series on Genesis*

Ken Peterson is pastor of the First Mennonite Church, 379 N. Campus Ave., Upland, CA 91786.

God has multiplied her service

Marion Keeney Preheim

"Hers is not a cheap or easy optimism but an optimism forged on the anvil of difficult experiences." So says Cornelia Lehn's friend and co-worker, Herta Funk. They worked together for many years for the Commission on Education. Lehn retired from her COE work Dec. 31, 1982.

A striking characteristic of "Nellie" is her positive attitude. She looks back at her struggles to build a career with thanks for the opportunities that came her way.

"She has a strong conviction of God working in our lives," says Eleanor Kaufman of Newton, Kan. "I also see her as a gentle person, but one who has a lot of depth. And the peace concern is at the core of her life."

Early experiences in Saskatchewan helped shape her life and character. As Russian Mennonite immigrants to Canada, her parents were anxious that she learn German, which her 21-year-old sister Tina began teaching her at age six. At times Nellie balked. "You'll thank me some day," Tina said. Nellie did, for knowing German brought many of her career opportunities.

During grade school, children in one family would yell "Mennonite, Mennonite" at her in a derogatory way. So her father told her Mennonite history stories, for which she is still thankful. Today Nellie is a skilled storyteller.

She also learned from him to stand firm on biblical beliefs, no matter what the consequences. Once in her late teens the class president suggested all contribute for a war bond. After much struggle, Nellie told her she could not. A similar request came later from a job supervisor. In both cases she stood firm and was respected for it.

A physical disability also formed character. Around age 10 her ankles began to hurt until gradually it was difficult for her to stand. In her teens she prayed, "God, let my life be useful." Out of the crucible of her illness came some of the deep thinking Kaufman noted.

Despite her condition but with great difficulty, Nellie pursued her education. At age 20 nerve surgery corrected the blood flow to her ankles. Slowly the veins widened and she recovered.

She worked in Vancouver, 70 miles from the place where her family had moved, but felt little fulfillment.

And then came opportunities in the church at large, many because she knew German. She worked for Mennonite Central Committee in Kitchener, Ont., Akron, Pa., and Gronau, Germany. Her work in Germany led to a secretarial job in Newton, Kan., with the Board of Christian Service.

In 1956 Willard Claassen of the Board of Education and Publication (now COE) asked her to edit the children's story paper *Kinderbote* "because she could handle German." She later worked full time translating the graded Sunday school curriculum into German and editing the *Junior Messenger* as well as *Kinderbote*.

Nellie attended Bethel College, Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Mennonite Biblical Seminary (1954-1959) and the University of Iowa for a master's in journalism (1966-1967).

She began editing a kindergarten curriculum in 1967. A Bible storybook was needed for it. Lehn prepared several sample stories and read them to the commission. "Here we've been looking for a writer of these stories," Claassen said, "and we didn't realize we had one right in our office." Nellie was chosen to write the book, which was called *God Keeps His Promise*.

After traveling to introduce the kindergarten curriculum, she accepted a newly created COE position in children's work. Her hope was to work through the regional education committees and with the colleges and seminary to create leadership for children's work in the churches.

Project: Teach, a five-day teachers' workshop originally to be on college campuses, was her special project. Later she became the General Conference editor of the children's section of *The Foundation Series*.

Nellie was also dealing personally with the perplexing issue of war taxes. She liked to read Bible verses that say to pay your taxes, but began to wonder why she did not concentrate equally on those saying to love your enemies and put your sword away.

Finally she felt she could not pay that part of her taxes going to war purposes and asked the General Conference office not to withhold any of her salary for taxes. "The time comes when you have to cut through all the complexity and be obedient," she says, reminiscent of her stand earlier in life.

At the 1977 triennium she stated her views. The conference continues to work on this issue even today.

Nellie took a leave of absence from COE in 1978-79 to write *Peace Be With You*, a children's book of peace stories. That same year she went to South America for COE to help the Mennonites there get started on translating *The Foundation Series* into German. *God Keeps His Promise* became *Gott hält sein Versprechen*.

She took a six-month leave from COE in 1981 to write *I Heard Good News Today*, a children's mission and service story book. Women in Mission commissioned it with a release date some time in 1983.

The South American Mennonites invited her back in 1982 to help them use *The Foundation Series*. She came back to her work in children's education from which she has now retired.

Nellie plans to continue working — at her own pace — back home in Chilliwack, B.C. She has been asked to write a teacher's guide for *Peace Be With You* and tape the stories in *Gott hält sein Versprechen*. She will be going to Germany to work with the Umsiedler congregations in May and June on Christian education and curriculum.

God answered Cornelia Lehn's teenage prayer asking for a useful life in ways far beyond what she expected. Her letting go to let God work in her brought to the church a dedicated servant.

MEDITATION

We are children of God

"To all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God. . ." (John 1:12 NIV).

We as believers are children of God. Through Jesus Christ we have the right or the authorization to become new beings — children. We are recipients of a gift, and that gift is the right to become children of God. The result of God's love is that we should be called children of God.

For an adult to be called a child of God is not a putdown. On the contrary, it is an identification with God's family. God has passed on to us some of his own nature. There is a family likeness.

As children of God we take on the childlike character of a free and spontaneous spirit of responsiveness, a curiosity, a directness that is simple and loving. As children of God we are sincere. We see the world with expectant and wondering eyes, realizing that life is still ahead of us. And we are peacemakers, for peacemakers are called sons (children) of God (Matthew 5:9).

Often the world sees childlike characteristics as sentimental or theatrical. Certainly it isn't manly. But it would cheapen faith to think it important to be recognized by the world on its terms. The world does not recognize "compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience" (Colossians 3:12) as adult characteristics. And certainly male adults do not want to be known for holding these as their ideals.

Yet when we become children of God it is precisely these characteristics that we are to take on. They are the fruits of the Spirit. And are they not the characteristics of children — tender, gentle, kind, trusting, patient, peaceful? They make us vulnerable, as vulnerable as children are in an adult-oriented world, for who suffers first and most when adults hate and battle each other?

It is not easy to accept that as children of God we are to become that exposed. But is that not what we see in Jesus Christ who "humbled himself and became obedient to death" (Philippians 2:8)? And did Paul not begin the passage with that idea — "Your attitude should be the same as that of Jesus Christ" (2:5)?

How different our world would be if we would make our policies with children in mind? What would the church be like if it were patterned after the characteristics of children?

"How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is" (1 John 3:1, 2).

John Gaeddert

Serving your country

True patriotism does not lie in
believing that your country is
perfect, but in seeing its faults
and trying to remove them.

Alan Paton, author of Cry the Beloved Country

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This issue focuses on the Commission on Education — where it's at and what it's up to. Cornelia Lehn, until recently director of children's education, did much work in helping us prepare this issue. (We added a special feature on her.) Other COE staff involved were John Gaeddert, executive secretary; Elizabeth Yoder, general editor; Herta Funk, director of adult education; Edna Dyck, revisions editor of *The Foundation Series*; James L. Dunn, director of higher education, and Paul and Lois Unruh, directors of Marriage Encounter.

Notice also the personal comments about Bethlehem '83 and watch for more of these. Ken Peterson continues a "creative" interpretation of Genesis.

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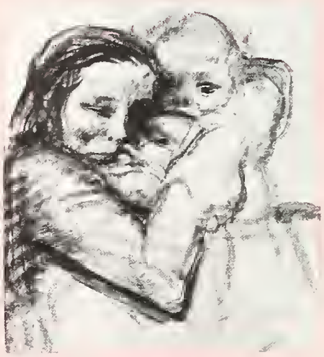
EDITORIAL

The kingdom belongs to the little people

Cornelia Lehn



In my office hangs a picture by Käthe Kollwitz, a German artist before and during World Wars I and II. Through her art she made powerful statements about the human condition. On my Kollwitz piece, a mother, her eyes painfully closed as if she expects a bomb to explode, holds her children in strong arms. She seems to be passionately, desperately trying to shield them from harm.

Children are vulnerable. Adults need to protect them and create a safe environment for them in which to grow, not only physically but mentally and spiritually. God has entrusted children to us adults. It is a great honor to take care of those of whom Jesus said, ". . . to such belongs the kingdom of God" (Mark 10:14).

Our ancestors understood this. They moved from country to country so that their children might be safe — that they might have food, go to a good school and be able to learn what the Bible teaches. The home, the school, the church, Sunday school, Christian literature, the community — all worked together to hold their children in a strong embrace.

We have grown up in those homes, schools and communities. Now it is our turn. Passionately, desperately, we too want to protect our children from the harm that is today threatening them physically, mentally and spiritually.

We cannot bring up our children in the same kind of homes and communities in which we grew up. The times have changed. The threat of a nuclear war hangs over the whole world. There is no faraway, safe place to which we can take our children. Often the community, reading materials, television and schools foster intellectual development that does not take spiritual growth into consideration. All that is left seems to be a feeble, gasping attempt to counteract the unwholesome influences.

But children grow as total human beings in a total environment. If that environment is not to destroy our children we will have to transform it. Jesus believed that to be possible. He did not say, "Perhaps under some circumstances you will be able to be the salt of the earth." He said, "You *are* the salt of the earth" (Matthew 5:13).

Let us then with faith and hope work on the "jubilee" of a just and safe society so that all the children in the world may live.

Let us with strong and joyful hearts help our families to build Christian homes. With so many forces battering away at marriage, at family time together, at loyalty and commitment, let us be strong and caring communities of believers to protect our families from crumbling.

Let us reach out to our communities and be salt and light there. We cannot take only "our" children to Jesus. He loves equally those other children who are looking into our brightly lit windows with sad and longing eyes.

Let us be present in the schools which wield so great an influence on their lives. Do we know our children's teachers? Do we support them? Are we influencing our schools to be a safe place for all children to develop and grow?

Let us continue to teach the Word of God to our children. It is the greatest treasure we can give them, for through it they will find the Savior and meaning in their lives.

Above all, let us be more aware of the children in our congregations. Let us love them and enjoy their presence. Include them in our worship services and learn from them so that we too may enter the kingdom of heaven. Share our faith with them.

Together we can create a safe physical, mental and spiritual environment so our children can grow up into strong men and women of God who will proclaim the Good News in all its fullness to those who have not heard. Let us make sure that we pass on the salt and the light and allow God to carry out his plan for the whole world.

THE MENNONITE

OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST

98:06 MARCH 15, 1983

When triumphal entries a

Joyce M. Shutt

Sometimes when a story becomes too familiar, it loses the power to impress us. Unless we're careful, that's exactly what happens to the tried and true stories of the Bible, stories like the triumphal entry of Christ.

I dug into my commentaries looking for new insights about the triumphal entry. There weren't any. There weren't any because the triumphal entry wasn't one of those really significant, pivotal experiences in Jesus' life or his saving acts. Or so it seemed at first. The various commentators felt the account was included because Zechariah had prophesied that the Messiah would come into the city of Zion riding on a donkey. But such processions weren't unusual for Jesus; he had a way of drawing crowds all through his ministry.

What eventually caught my attention and triggered this line of reflection was the observation one commentator made that Luke in his account of the triumphal entry echoes the strains of the angel's song recorded at Jesus' birth. Matthew has the crowds chanting, "Praise to David's Son. God bless him who comes in the name of the Lord. Praise be to God." Luke's crowd says, "God bless the king who comes in the

The people . . . chose
to see the palm branches,
the hosannas, the cheers . . .
while Jesus was quietly
weeping . . . begging,
"If you only knew
what is needed for peace,
but you cannot
see it."

n’t

name of the Lord. Peace in heaven and glory to God!” Hear that familiar ring? “Peace on earth, good will to all people?”

Peace. That word wiggled its way into my head and stayed there. I slept on it. It wouldn’t go away. Peace. In a day when the threat of the ultimate war looms great, when violence rears its ugly head over and over — peace. Oh how we long for peace — a real peace — not the peace of empty words or political rhetoric. Not the peace of a cold war or the peace imposed by fear of mutual annihilation.

Peace. How we long for peace. Peace in our homes. Peace in our interpersonal relationships. We live like wound-up springs, our lives and friendships and marriages explode apart at the slightest touch. “God bless the king who comes in the name of the Lord. Peace in heaven and glory to God,” cries Luke’s crowd.

We can learn a lot about Jesus and the writers who remembered and wrote about him by looking at how they arranged the sequence of events, stories, teachings. The way one thing flows from another, affects another, fills out the sparse details — the simple terse words. Luke’s triumphal entry account takes on a great impact when it is linked with the section immediately following, for Luke has Jesus coming into the city with crowds yelling and cheering, while he is weeping over his beloved Jerusalem and lamenting, “Oh Jerusalem, if you only knew today what is needed for peace. But you cannot see it.”

Triumphal entries aren’t always what they seem. This one wasn’t. This one wasn’t because the people then weren’t looking. They chose to see the palm branches, the hosannas, the cheers, excitement and fun. And all the while Jesus was quietly weeping, tears streaming down his face, begging, “If you only knew what is needed for peace, but you cannot see it.”

John writes in his Gospel, “For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son that whosoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his son into the world to be its judge, but to be its savior.” And that savior rode into the capital city of his country on an unbroken donkey, not in a fancy Cadillac. He dressed in simple clothes, not in full military or princely regalia. He rode with a band of motley followers, not accompanied with the latest in military hardware. And he says, “If you’d only look at me and see what is needed for peace.”

The first triumphal entry remains our problem also. We too are distracted by the hosannas. Do we know what is needed for peace? Do we understand what Jesus wants us to do? I think so. Believers or unbelievers, liberals or fundamentalists, I think that deep down we all know what is right and wrong, that which makes for peace or war. The guidelines are quite clear. “Thou shalt not steal. Thou shalt not commit adultery. Thou shalt not bear false witness. Go the second mile. Turn the other cheek. Love your enemies. Do good to those who despitefully use you. . . .”

Yes, we know what is needed for peace, but we don’t want to hear. Our problem is not ignorance; our problem is not wanting to do those things that make for peace. We want the fruits of peace without the effort and self-sacrifice God’s way involves. Tanks, guns and bombs seem so much easier than scaling down our standard of living, giving up some of our opportunities, our easy ways of life, going our own way, doing our own thing, refusing to compromise. That’s easier than giving up, sharing, changing plans, listening to others.

The triumphal entry could be a beautiful symbol for us as a peace church. It’s there if we claim it. It means freedom at last. The crowds went wild when they sensed that the Messiah might be there. He would deliver them from Rome. They were right. He was the one. Not only had he come to deliver them from Rome, he came to deliver them from all kinds of bondage. But as the story played itself out, they turned their backs on him because he refused to save them their way. They couldn’t accept salvation when it came in a form different from the one they’d chosen.

So, while the crowd shouted hosanna and enjoyed their fantasies of a great war, Jesus sat on his donkey and wept because he knew their way wouldn’t work. He wept because he realized that time had run out and the only chance he had any more of getting through was by giving his life in the hopes they — and we — would realize that might-makes-right power games don’t work. He wanted them to see that love is so much stronger than violence or force; that real power, healing power, comes in loving, caring, accepting, nurturing, serving.

Picture Jesus riding into Washington or Ottawa. See him in his simple everyday clothes. See him on a donkey. See the crowds milling around him at a peace rally, waiting for his keynote speech. See him riding past the Pentagon or the Parliament Buildings, tears streaming down his face, and in the din of the crowd, which is shouting trite peace phrases like “hell no, we won’t go” or the militaristic chants of “kill the enemies; make the world safe for democracy.” Can you hear his choked sobs? Can you hear him say, “Oh Washington, Washington; oh Ottawa, Ottawa, if you only knew what is needed for peace. But you cannot see it. And so the time will come when your enemies will surround you with barricades, blockade you, and close in on you from every side. They will completely destroy you and the people within your walls; not a single stone will they leave in its place because you did not recognize when God came to save you”?

Triumphal entries aren’t always what they seem. Before they can be truly triumphal there has to be letting go, giving up, change — accepting different ideas and ways of doing things. Before Jesus’ entry into our lives can be a triumph — for him or for us — we have to recognize and accept the time and method with which he comes to save us.

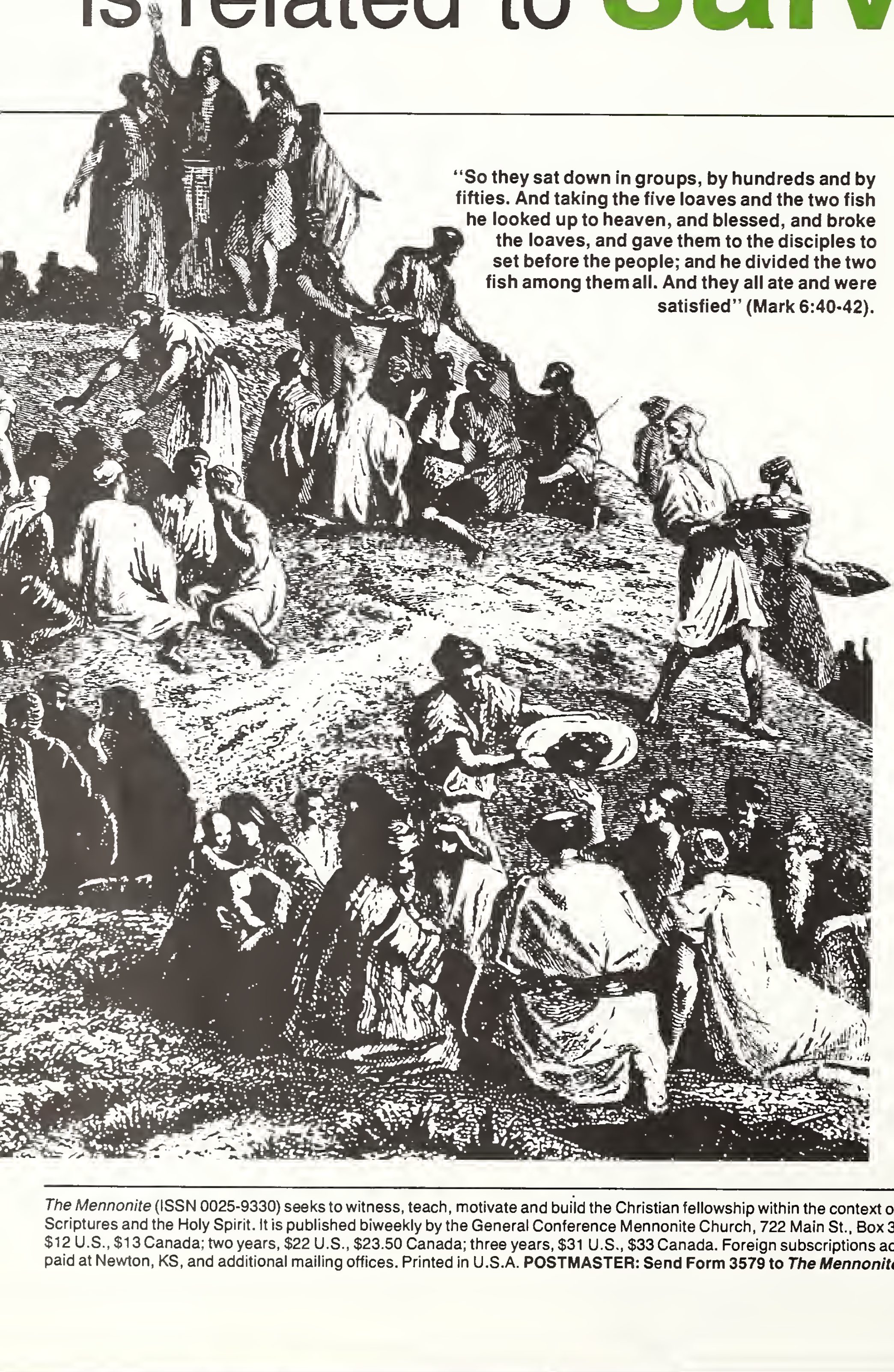
That time came when Jesus was born in a lowly stable, among lowly people and the angels sang of peace, not war, power and affluence. That time came as he walked the streets and roads preaching and teaching a message of love, sharing and forgiveness. That time came as he rode weeping into his beloved capital city a few days before he was crucified. That time came when he died for our sins, while we still refused to see the truth and freedom in his ways. That time came when he rose from the dead and returned to us as the Holy Spirit. That time came when his followers cared enough to record his story for us to read today. That time comes each day as he stands at the doors of our hearts and knocks, tears streaming down his cheeks, loving us so deeply, begging us to see what is needed for peace and salvation — be it international, local or interpersonal.

Triumphal entries aren’t always what they seem. But they can be. Whether Jesus’ ride into Washington or Moscow or Winnipeg or London or Mountain Lake or Vancouver or Fresno is triumphal or not depends on us.

It depends on us. •

Betty Dyck

Use of money is related to salvation



"So they sat down in groups, by hundreds and by fifties. And taking the five loaves and the two fish he looked up to heaven, and blessed, and broke the loaves, and gave them to the disciples to set before the people; and he divided the two fish among them all. And they all ate and were satisfied" (Mark 6:40-42).

Significant experiences and past influences formulate our thinking about money, finances and stewardship. Although we enjoy a common Mennonite faith, we are not necessarily at the same point in understanding and acceptance of stewardship tenets.

The stewardship and economics program embarked upon by Bethel Mennonite Church, Winnipeg, in the fall of 1981 was an initial attempt to alter fixed ideas about stewardship and set our congregation on a new and challenging path toward a more liberal stewardship of time, talents and money.

Dan Kauffman and John Rudy visited Bethel in March 1981. Kauffman shared an enlightening view for the Bible suggesting stewardship (from the Greek meaning "house management") is more managing for Christ's benefit than actual tithing of one's income. Giving becomes a response of joy and not merely directed duty.

Rudy suggested that from a practical point of view, people should apply money management as the bottom line of everyday existence, freeing ourselves for a positive attitude to money and resources. Money is a poor place to anchor our hopes. Hope should be anchored in God.

The weekend meetings ended with support for the development of a program in the church to foster open dialogue on stewardship. Hugo Peters agreed to formulate a facility to act as a teaching tool, directing members toward reading materials and encouraging confrontation among brothers and sisters. Peters spent the next five months coordinating sessions to commence in September.

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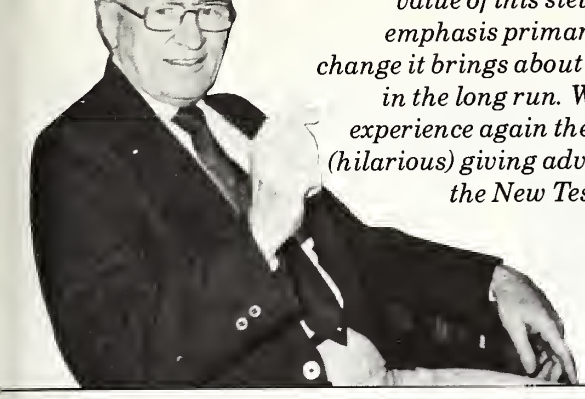
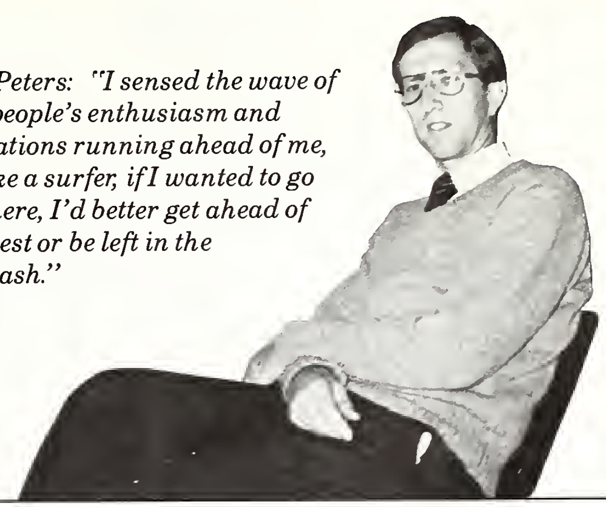


Jake Pauls: "I would see the value of this stewardship emphasis primarily in the change it brings about in people in the long run. We need to experience again the cheerful (hilarious) giving advocated in the New Testament."



Hugo Peters: "I sensed the wave of other people's enthusiasm and expectations running ahead of me, and like a surfer, if I wanted to go anywhere, I'd better get ahead of that crest or be left in the backwash."

Although the whole Bethel congregation accepted the challenge, a more intimate understanding of stewardship became the goal of a group of 50 (with twice as many men as women) who met regularly in adult Sunday school class until June.

The congregation was kept informed by periodic sermons on stewardship, provocative skits during Sunday morning worship services, articles in the *Bethel Bridge* (monthly newsletter), a Saturday seminar which attracted about 100 members and a comprehensive report by Peters in March 1982.

Early in September 1981 pastor Jake Pauls delivered a timely sermon. "Have you ever wondered about collecting and giving regularly to the church?" he asked. "I'm wondering, Do you ever get tired of it? Tired of begging? 'When will the church get out of the charity business?' you ask. It never will, because that's our business. Giving should be without strings. John 3:16 states, '. . . for God so loved the world he gave his only Son. . . .' Giving is based on intervention of the grace of God in our lives and thus transforms us. We are never the same afterward."

In class sessions a procession of informed speakers sparked lively discussions, ably moderated by Hugo Peters. A recurring theme surfaced regarding Mennonites' guilt feelings about being wealthy. Where did it originate? The class agreed we must rid ourselves of this guilt complex which cripples our dealings and hinders us from living creatively with our wealth.

In the beginnings, leaders helped review the biblical and historical background of stewardship. Gerald Gerbrandt, Canadian Mennonite Bible College dean, led the class through basic Old Testament concepts. He explained that there was no theology of privation, no inherent good in not having a blessing. However, he pointed out how temptation was greatest for Israelites when comfortably settled in the land, with obedience and trust best when in exile. Privation made them good stewards. Affluence dulled their memories: (Deuteronomy 8:10 — "When you have eaten and are satisfied, praise the Lord . . . be careful you do not forget the Lord.")

Summarizing the Old Testament prophets' messages, Peters concluded that our wealth itself was not the object of their criticism, but the greedy accumulation by dishonesty and oppression of the less fortunate. This was just one instance when the class came to grips with the duality of living in today's complex world and continuing to maintain a Christian conscience. People are drawn unwittingly into becoming participants by purchasing products which support multinational corporations that oppress the poor.

Besides securing speakers on specific subjects, both from within and outside the congregation, there was mutual sharing by class members. One Sunday a panel comprising a teenager, a middle-aged mother and a couple nearing retirement illustrated the chasm in stewardship concepts. Depression families remembered making do with hand-me-down clothing, whereas the modern, affluent family considered providing a second car for young adults to attend church activities a good stewardship of resources.

Since the unmet church budget had been a factor in entering into a dialogue on stewardship, budgeting was the specific topic of one session (and kept surfacing in others). Pastor Pauls led the class through thoughtful introspection, illustrating that what we give is often influenced by a group when it should be determined in light of our relationship with God. Pauls confesses, "When I'm not giving, I'm not meeting my own needs."

Although the church budget should motivate us, it doesn't always. People have definite priorities in allocating their donations. When the budget doesn't conform to their ideas, people withhold.

One of the many highlights of sharing was Allan Toews' perspective on stewardship of time. Allan, a psychiatrist, is currently on a sabbatical working in mental health in Barbados.

Formerly, time was a personal possession. Allan felt free to do as he wished, with his time nicely directed and lead-

Daniel Kauffman and John Rudy were commissioned for a team ministry to give one year of intensive work to the money issues we face in our families, congregations and church relationships. Their work was guided by an advisory group made up of people from the General Conference Mennonite and Mennonite Church congregations. It was an interchurch emphasis sponsored by Mennonite Mutual Aid.

Of the 12 congregations who agreed to participate, Bethel Mennonite Church in Winnipeg was the only Canadian Mennonite church involved in the project.

"To me, good stewardship is a way of life . . . it's like a demand loan that can be recalled at any moment."
Hugo Peters

Objectives of Stewardship and Economics

1. To provide helpful guidance and prophetic leadership in identifying and addressing the bewildering economic issues which confront Mennonites in their everyday lives.
2. To solicit the help of people throughout the church in developing a biblical understanding of money and to apply these biblical principles to the effective use of money in family and church responsibilities.
3. To design and encourage effective models and processes, together with whatever tools and materials may be needed, which help local congregations to enter into serious dialogue about money matters and to challenge each other to greater Christian obedience and faithfulness.

ing to a comfortable income plus advancement in his profession. With the affluence, though, came depression — too many commitments and insufficient time for reflection, meditation and enjoyment. He became a slave to time before he realized time belonged to God.

Prior to this, voluntary service had been something noble which he recommended to others but felt was ludicrous in terms of his own life. But the thought nagged — how had those people become so comfortable with time that they could volunteer it?

When his sabbatical loomed on the horizon, Toews did some soul searching. Realizing he was not ready for VS and following countless arrangements, hours of family consultations and discussions with friends, Toews is struggling with the enormous task of making a dent in mental health care in Barbados. Also his wife, Johanna, and their two children are learning to live in another culture, giving them a chance to compare the norms we take for granted with the actualities of another land.

Several people shared their vocations and how they felt their jobs fulfilled criteria for Christian living. Others opened up their financial setups for critical scrutiny.

In his March report, Hugo Peters said, "My assignment this past year to try to coordinate some activities related to money and stewardship here at Bethel has been the most exciting and stimulating task I've been involved in for some time. Besides being timely in the church, it coincided with an awareness in our home that we needed to do some serious discernment in this area. . . . The potential inherent in the managerial, technical and professional skills as well as the combined gross income of $6 million a year represented by this congregation continues to overwhelm me."

Even before the program ended, changes occurred in the congregation. Neil Heinrichs, council chairman, said in relation to Bethel's 1982 budget, "We have not even once from the pulpit asked people to support in that area . . . it is coming in better than before, even though people generally say economic times are worse. We too have people in the church who are unemployed." Heinrichs believes the whole stewardship concept has begun to filter through the congregation due to discussions in K-groups and other small gatherings, and in some instances it has manifested itself in a total family concept.

A lengthy questionnaire distributed to selected members of the congregation proved disappointing in numerous ways to Hugo Peters. Interpretation indicated a significant middle-of-the-road stance. "I wonder," said Peters, "if that doesn't very often cripple anything specific a church wants to do in the area of stewardship. . . . In spite of the fact that some people have distinct ideas, by the time they check it with others it has to be brought to the middle, otherwise we can't live with it."

One thing which came through consistently was agreement that our place of work, the media, the education system and society in general determine our economic values more than our church does.

Positive results of the stewardship and economics program include the addition of 30 titles to the church library strengthening resources related to stewardship, a receptive congregation with many members ready and willing to grapple with this area of their lives — honest learners not looking for a quick fix, but a place to begin — and readiness to talk money, stewardship and economics unabashedly and in a straightforward manner.

Two practical manifestations of the impact of the program are the initiation of the "green box" and a benevolent fund. The green box is an alphabetical listing of goods and services of congregational members willing to share them. The box had barely been located in the education wing when a member, temporarily off work, filled out a card offering free transportation. He hopes to form new relationships within the congregation while performing this service.

The following motion was passed at the June 1982 semiannual meeting: "To demonstrate that the members of Bethel Mennonite Church are a caring/sharing community, it is being proposed by this (stewardship) class that the church undertake to establish a benevolent fund for emergency usage. As emergency situations arise, the congregation, in an act of compassion, would reach out through this fund to meet the need."

Council chairman Heinrichs said, "This won't be the same thing as the *Armen Kasse* (treasury for the poor) prevalent in Mennonite circles years ago, but the principle is based on our taking up the responsibility of assisting our own brothers and sisters. It will take a lot of working out because our whole culture has shifted away from that."

Long-range planning includes encouraging stewardship in everything. To facilitate this, an ad hoc committee was formed to investigate the feasibility of a stewardship board with a variety of responsibilities, including designing a realistic budget and coordinating a yearly workshop in stewardship education.

"Where as a church do we go from here?" asks Hugo Peters, who has agreed to be chairman of the stewardship committee. "To be faithful we must move beyond awareness and study; we must translate new insights, however small, into real change, first in our personal lives, then also in the things we do in church, and the way in which we do them. . . . Perhaps our present and ultimate salvation is much more closely linked to the way we use our money than we'd like to think." •

The aged bring something new

Waldo W. Kaufman

Who is sufficiently wise to decide when an individual has lost his or her usefulness in society? It is alarming to see some of our senior citizens considered ineffective and unproductive simply because they have reached age 65. For some younger people a decision against our older people is easy to make. While we know the track record of those who have long served faithfully, the trail some younger people blaze is obscure.

I shall not forget the time H. A. Fast set a matter straight at the Estes Park General Conference several years ago. After a long, heated discussion on a crucial issue, Fast arose and emphatically spoke mature words of wisdom, bringing a sensible conclusion to the discussion. When Fast sat down, a dramatic hush fell over the audience. Then enthusiastic applause expressed approval to what he had said. He was then 85 years old. His mature vitality inspires and commands our respect.

Scriptures say that we are to give filial honor and obedience to the aged. The writer of Proverbs says, "The hoary head is a crown of glory if it be found in the way of righteousness" (16:31). Time and again God throws the arm of protection about the aged, and he expects that we too reverence and respect the hoary head and the trembling hand.

Solomon says that the aged wear a crown of glory. God put it there. And because he put it there, we must always respect it. The tottering heads and bent shoulders of older people tell a story far more significant than words can utter or hearts can feel. Old age is a sign of heavenly favor. It is heaven's fulfillment of the promise, "With long life will I satisfy him and show him my salvation." Old age tells a story of struggle and strife, of service and sacrifice. The faded hair, the dimmed eyes, the wrinkled face, the gnarled hands all remind us of the struggle and sacrifice made in our behalf.

Old age is also a sign of spiritual maturity. Have you visited and prayed with old people? It is a strange experience. You feel that with them you stand on the verge of eternity. They are just one step from heaven and you are there beside them. Many of our older people never had the opportunity to wear a college academic gown. More important is the fact that they are dressed in the robe of Christ's matchless righteousness. We who are younger depend on the world for excitement; for the aged Christians the world of real meaning becomes larger. They move more fully into the world of God, of Jesus and of the angels. Yet too often we have a tendency to put these people in situations where their creative skills are stifled.

Ethel and H. A. Fast celebrated his 88th birthday last Oct. 12.

King David looked upon his old age with deep seriousness. He says as he addresses God in Psalm 71, "Cast me not off in the time of old age; forsake me not when my strength faileth. . . . Now when I am old and greyheaded, O God, forsake me not. . . . Thou shalt increase my greatness, and comfort me on every side." This psalm is the cry of an old man. The writer feels himself sinking near death. He realizes that in his old age many have turned against him. Yet he does not allow these things to dry up the springs of hope, nor do they weaken his religious spirit. The course of the writer of the Psalms from the time of birth seems to be marked with crucial experiences. Sickness, trials, persistent enemies and now when he is aged, his enemies put their heads together and pile more injustices upon him.

We need not in our day band together and overtly work against our aged to be unchristian. We can easily do so by simply deciding that we will ignore them, do little or nothing with them, and thereby immobilize them in old age. Our attitude toward the aged is not merely philosophical; it is theological. Our attitude depends upon our relationship to Jesus Christ.

Too often we feel that the aged (above 65) have little left in life to do. Wrong. Just because their bodies are old does not mean that all their faculties are worthless. Dante, Shakespeare, Goethe and many others did their finest work after they were 50 years of age. Goethe at 80 wrote the second part of his masterpiece *Faust*. Despite general attitudes toward the aged, gray power is making itself known. Soon the aged will be the majority segment of our population.

The aged have chiefly memory to look to; the young have hope. There are people in our churches who once were creative thinkers but who now grope after lost thoughts. Then failing to have the ability to recall them, look perplexed and with bewildered eyes glance at us in utter helplessness. It is disconcerting to listen to those who were once quickwitted church leaders babble idly incoherent words, while their hands are groping vaguely for familiar objects. It is disheartening to see the eyes of the aged grow dim and their cheerful and courageous spirits fail.

Let us never, however, cut the cord of relationship with the aged. We need this link with our own future. Let's begin by seeking to mend the sense of dignity of all people of every age. Our aged can serve in numerous ways. Why not explore the possibilities? Life should be an ongoing network of relationships from birth to childhood, to adolescence, to adulthood, to old age and into eternity. We need to perceive life in its totality. Life is from everlasting to everlasting. When an old person whispers to you and holds out his or her hand, listen carefully and clasp that hand. A rare opportunity awaits you at that moment. Don't pass it by.

Waldo W. Kaufman, 7 Jasper Ct., North Newton, KS 67117, is pastor of the Mennonite Church of Lehigh, Kan.

Decisions are not easy

Louise Peters

Decisions are always hard to make. Some can make them easier than others, but we all are faced with them constantly. Friends may give us advice, but the final decision is ours. The common expressions used — "leave it up to God" and "pray about it" — are at times frustrating because in many situations there is not time for a prayer meeting. Action must be taken immediately. What do we do then, and how do we know later that we did the right thing?

When the job opportunity at Walnut Receiving Home was offered to me, I had a weekend to decide whether or not I wanted it. I didn't think God had planned for me to leave the peaceful countryside, to work in a home with natives of whose culture I knew so little. During my time of deciding, I was made aware of the fact that God fulfills his purpose in our lives if we make him our aim and goal. His influence in our daily life helps us to do what is right even when "split decisions" have to be made.

Walnut Receiving Home is a most exciting place to be, filled with decision making. The work is okay but what really makes the job is the many guests that walk through our doors. Decisions like what I should do first — the laundry, scrub the floor, serve pork or beef for supper — are minor. But I'm also faced with major decisions. Should I point out her mistakes or not? If I do, how should I approach her? How much should I overlook or leave for tomorrow's worries? If I've made a mistake, do I take it out on the staff or do I make a conscious decision to be cheerful and not spoil someone else's day?

Trying to decide how to approach the timid prenatal in order not to scare her away is challenging, especially if language is a barrier. It feels good to calm a guest by just explaining the procedures of tests or X-rays. There is a time to speak but also a time to be quiet and just show you care by being friendly. Sometimes just a few questions or caring words open the way to a relationship of trust. To decide what would be the right thing to do is sometimes hard, but the right decisions can reward themselves. When trust is built, a lasting relationship is formed between the Walnut staff and the guests. It's a wonderful feeling when a long-distance call is made from someone on the reserve just to say hi. When the relationship is formed, one must decide how much of oneself should be given in order to maintain a friendship and still not be taken advantage of.

The decision to follow Christ has been my greatest. Being a witness at work is a delicate matter to me. I've decided to let Christ work through me and through my actions. At Walnut, when faced with problems, frustrations and decisions, it's sometimes hard to continue to love and accept. I have to remember that the people who come through the home may stay for only a matter of hours. I may never see them again. Will my greatest decision cause them to make a decision too?

Louise Peters served about two years at the Walnut Receiving Home, a place for native people coming temporarily to Winnipeg for health care, for visits or for other reasons. It is a service of Native Ministries for the Conference of Mennonites in Canada. Louise terminated her work at the end of December 1982 and has decided to do some traveling.

My testimony

Mary Ann Keeper

I would like to share a little as to how Jesus saved me. A minister came to visit our settlement. As he spoke, I understood. I listened and understood that I was lost. From there on the light seemed to shine. That is how I felt. Right there I made a turnabout in my life. I thank the Lord that he placed me in the light. Today I am still there. While I was lost I lived a wild life. I thank the Lord that he chose to help me. I also thank him for all the babies that I delivered (I have been the local midwife for many years). Things have gone well with all of them. Some of these are already grown up.

In John 12:35, 36, it says that Jesus answered, "The light will be among you a little longer. Continue on your way while you have the light, so that the darkness will not come upon you; for the one who walks in the dark does not know where he is going. Believe in the light, then, while you have it, so that you will be the people of the light."

This is how I believe, namely that all become the children of God. This is all I have to say. Greetings to all. Believe in him. The Lord has great pleasure in all of you and it is his will that all should be saved.

Why study *Justice and the Christian Witness?*

One of the themes at Bethlehem '83 is "Peace and Justice." A resource presently available to study this subject in preparation for the conference is the Mennonite Church and General Conference joint study book Justice and the Christian Witness. *Student guides and leader guides are available from Faith and Life Press, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, telephone 316/283-5100.*

We are involved

I'm writing this one week before election day, 1982, in the United States. Even though the word "justice" is rarely heard, I'm impressed with how much that concept is really basic to the rhetoric of the campaigners.

Among the issues being discussed are crime, unemployment, defense spending, urban problems and economic policies. These are all questions on which the biblical perspective is urgently needed. But unfortunately, very few of the candidates, even those who claim to speak for a religious "moral majority," seem to have studied what God has to say about justice in human affairs.

Regardless of the election outcomes, Christians in the United States and Canada are faced with tremendous opportunities for doing justice. We must also recognize the danger of failing to live out the righteousness that God requires. It is imperative that we do our homework on this great biblical theme.

The study guide is a most helpful tool for enabling Christians first to gain a basic understanding of justice in the context of God's saving work, and then to work at translating these convictions to the "secular structures" in which we must make our witness.

The signs of the times are ominous. As comfortable members of a powerful and wealthy society, we are challenged with massive global needs and dangers. We are involved, whether we like it or not, in crucial decisions that will influence the fate of the earth. We need solid theological grounding for making those decisions. All of us should be working faithfully at understanding *Justice and the Christian Witness. J. R. Burkholder, 1982-83 director of the Dallas Peace Center is on sabbatical leave from Goshen (Ind.) College.*

To test responsibilities

Many Christians wield considerable influence in public affairs and have a desire to pursue their responsibilities according to Christian principles. In Canada we sometimes talk of "conscientious participation" in government and other social structures. *Justice and the Christian Witness* is a tool to test our thinking in this area. It provides an opportunity to study guidelines for our involvement in and witness to social structures. It is also an opportunity for Mennonite congregations to test a consensus on justice as well as to profit from lessons learned by our missionaries and Mennonite Central Committee workers in contexts different from our own. This study report and guide can provide an incentive for Christians, individually and corporately, to respond compassionately, peaceably, justly and in a practical manner to issues of justice affecting them. *Don Friesen, minister, Ottawa Mennonite Church*

Justice
and the
Christian
Witness

Jesus the Christ

Emma Blosser Hartzler

He gave the thorn's sharp prick
To guard the rich red rose.

He wove of flawed design
A patterned garment new.

He set alight the gleam
Within a darkened eye.

He . . . the cornerstone
Rejected by the builders.

He closed a favored door
Fresh vistas to reveal.

He used a cord of grief
To bind the earth to heaven.

He filled the sky with night
To glorify his stars.

He . . . the Crucified . . .
With his stripes we are healed.

Roosevelt Jones, a 49-year-old itinerant who sleeps in a garage and eats in soup kitchens, stood on the steps of the Capitol in Washington Jan. 25 just hours before President Reagan was scheduled to speak inside on the State of the Union. "I see nearly 20 million people out of work or underemployed," Jones said. "I see men, women and children forced to eat out of trash bins, forced to seek shelter in cardboard boxes, broken cars and vacant houses." Jones addressed about 300 people, many of them poor and homeless themselves, some carrying signs that read, "The hungry can't 'stay the course,' Mr. Reagan" and, "Reagan wins, children lose. Words won't feed our kids." Billed as "The People's State of the Union," the event was staged by a Washington activist group called the Community for Creative Non-Violence to demonstrate the real plight of many Americans that the organizers feel the Reagan administration chooses to ignore. The event ended with the arrests of 162 demonstrators, including four children, who refused to leave the Capitol Rotunda. In his speech, Jones said, "I see the misuse of the wealth of the world's richest nation; hundreds of millions of dollars being tossed down the military rat hole."

NEWS

Saskatchewan delegates talk stewardship

Swift Current, Sask. — A 33 percent increase in giving during 1982, coupled with underspending of conference budgets, provided a net operating surplus for the Conference of Mennonites in Saskatchewan last year, but did little to allay delegates' fears about accumulated deficits from previous years.

For those attending the conference's annual sessions at Swift Current Bible Institute Feb. 25-26, money matters and stewardship became the dominant themes. The opening chords were struck by Jake Driediger of Drake in the conference's first hour when he reported that CMS members gave only about 4 percent of their disposable incomes to the church, and the motif reached its crescendo during the last hour of the sessions when delegates again struggled over the desirability of selling the youth farm near Rosthern to improve the conference's financial position.

Conference participants could feel the youth farm debate brewing all weekend. Purchased by the Saskatchewan youth organization from the federal government in 1943 for a mere $20,000, the nearly 1½ sections of land have been both a small source of revenue and a bone of contention within CMS in recent years. A nursing home and a number of other buildings are currently located on its premises.

The youth farm issue simmered during the SCBI (which still owes more than half a million dollars on its new campus) report on Friday afternoon, the address on "Carrying Out Our Commitments" by chairman Art Wiens of Herschel on Friday evening and the report from the program review committee, created a year ago to take a hard look at all CMS programs, on Saturday morning.

After an amended motion to sell the farm (and decide later on the use of the proceeds) had endured over an hour of debate on Saturday afternoon, Clare Neufeld of Prince Albert moved that the measure "be tabled for a special mini-conference to be called by the executive committee in the coming year to deal with the farm issue." The tabling motion carried.

Reporting for the program review committee earlier in the day, chairman Ernie Bergen provided delegates with a comprehensive picture of the stewardship of CMS members. Although the average giving has kept pace with rising disposable incomes over the past 12 years, current levels of giving to the church are running at approximately 4.2 percent. Bergen stated that although his committee found a "rather soft understanding of programs on all three levels of conference (provincial, Canadian and General)," the commitment levels to these programs were strong. "The sentiment that 'we can do it' recurred continually," said Bergen. The CMS delegates received four recommendations from his committee: (1) that publicity about conference programming be increased, (2) that such publicity be integrated among the various conference levels, (3) that Saskatchewan church members give more consideration to the financial stewardship and (4) that further program expansion by CMS be guided by member support.

The day before, in his keynote address to the conference titled "Determining Priorities for our Giving — Individually and Congregationally," Jake Driediger emphasized the importance of a greater openness on the part of members in sharing information with each other about their incomes, needs and priorities. "How long will it be," he asked, "before we can be honest and open with ourselves in the church about how much we give? We are responsible for our programs; we must be critical and scrutinize them. . . . We must be serious about discerning God's will."

Reports from SCBI, Rosthern Junior

Henry W. Friesen, one of the original purchasers of the youth farm, argues against its sale.

In reply to recent charges that the National Council of Churches and the World Council of Churches are aiding violent revolutionary movements, NCC president James A. Armstrong asserted that neither interchurch body has given American church funds to revolutionary groups for political use. He did admit that money had gone to feed the hungry and buy medicine in areas controlled by revolutionary or Marxist-oriented groups, but stated that in all cases the funds were channeled through church groups and not political leaders. The accusations were made in articles in *Reader's Digest* and on the CBS program "60 Minutes."

Soviet efforts have had no significant influence on the nuclear freeze movement in the United States, says a report by the U.S. House Select Committee on Intelligence. Based on hearings held in July, the 337-page document concluded that the Soviet Union attempted to influence the movement but that its efforts were more successful in Western Europe than in the United States. "The bottom line is that the hearings provide no evidence that the Soviets direct, manage or manipulate the nuclear freeze movement," said the panel's chairman.

Despite the election of a civilian government a year ago, "it appears that the military remains the dominant political force" in Honduras, says a report published by Americas Watch, an international monitoring agency. The report says that "the practice of arresting individuals for political reasons and then refusing to acknowledge their whereabouts and status seems to have become established in Honduras."

College, the education committee, camp coordinating committee and missions committee were well received. An executive committee motion to again fill the position of conference pastor stirred some discussion.

After a suggestion from David Neufeld of North Battleford "that the position be frozen until more funding is available," and a reinforcement from Diedrich Gerbrandt of Rosthern to study the matter further, a motion to defer the decision until next year was defeated. Instead, the executive committee motion squeaked by with a vote of 82 to 68.

Later in the weekend, delegates added the qualification that "the executive committee examine the future of the conference pastor and youth worker positions and, together with the Saskatchewan Mennonite Youth Organization and the education committee, bring a recommendation in 1984."

Reports emerging from a closed reconciliatory meeting between pastors and Louise and Henry V. Friesen, who resigned as conference minister a year ago, were positive in tone.

In other business, delegates approved resolutions to allow RJC to solicit door-to-door for operating funds pending congregational approval, to continue German-language broadcasts on station CKSW and to grant certain lay leaders from congregations with no active pastor some funds for attendance of the pastor's study program at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries.

The conference passed a 1983 budget of $497,000, an increase of 2 percent over last year's budget, but 11 percent over last year's receipts.

All three of the conference's elected executive officers were acclaimed in their positions: Art Wiens, Herschel, chairman; Irvin Schmidt, Laird, vice chairman; and Melita Bartel, North Battleford, secretary. *Larry Cornies*

New alternative service rules show great improvement

Akron, Pa. (MCC U.S.)—The U.S. Selective Service System made major changes in favor of conscientious objectors in a third draft of alternative service regulations. This third proposal was published in the *Federal Register* on Feb. 18 for a 30-day public comment period.

Major revisions were made in the five areas of appeals procedures, job prioritization, employer and job criteria, allowance of overseas service, and provisions for civilians to administer the program.

1. Appeals procedure. An alternative service worker can appeal any job assignment or reassignment for reasons of conscience consistent with his initial conscientious objector claim. Appeals are first lodged administratively with the alternative service office. If the administrative request is denied, the conscientious objector can appeal to a Civilian Review Board consisting of civilian volunteers. Unlike the previous proposal, the Civilian Review Board's decision is final and not subject to review by Selective Service.

2. Job prioritization to meet mobilization manpower needs has been completely dropped from the regulations.

3. Overseas service will be allowed as long as the sending employer is based in the United States, meets the eligibility criteria and demonstrates capability to oversee and monitor the overseas worker.

4. Civilians will be hired for alternative service administrative positions dealing directly with conscientious objectors as soon as feasible after mobilization.

5. Employer and job criteria similar to 1-W era regulations have been added. Employers generally must be engaged in charitable activity that benefits the public and whose programs improve the public health, welfare or environment. Health care services, education, environmental programs, social services, community service and agricultural work are listed in the regulations as appropriate alternative service work.

Why these dramatic revisions in alternative service planning? Three factors emerge as being determinative. First, the conscientious objector community played a key role in expressing concern for a fair and equitable alternative service program. Over 800 comments were sent to Selective Service following publication of the first alternative service proposal. Numerous delegations went to Selective Service headquarters and the halls of Congress, including several from Mennonite Central Committee and from the National Interreligious Service Board for Conscientious Objectors.

A second factor was Congressional interest marshaled during the critical developmental stages of the alternative service program. Key oversight committees as well as individual senators and representatives exercised their "checks and balances" function of government by introducing specific legislation or resolutions calling for changes in alternative service planning and accountability on the part of the Selective Service System.

Finally, significant staff changes at Selective Service headquarters cannot be overlooked.

MCC U.S. Peace Section will be carefully reviewing the regulations and formulating a written response. Because there have been major revisions in the regulations, MCC is not requesting a 30-day extension for comment. *Jim Amstutz*

Evanston, Ill., is considering a ban on the free distribution of cigarette samples in the community. The ban would halt the common practice of sampling by which cigarette companies introduce new brands. "We give the public a distinct double message if we tell them cigarettes are dangerous and then they walk down the street and see them freely distributed," commented Monte Levinson, a senior physician at Evanston Hospital and chief proponent of the sampling ban.

The largest single shipment from the MCC (Canada) Food Bank left Vancouver port in mid-February. Eleven thousand metric tons of wheat were shipped to Asia, with the major portion, 330,000 bushels going to India. The value of this food supply is approximately $2 million, plus $500,000 for freight costs. The wheat will be used for drought emergency aid response and food-for-work projects.

Manitobans reach accord on Elim, focus on 'kingdom living'

Winnipeg — The 276 delegates from the Conference of Mennonites in Manitoba's 49 churches were frustrated at their Feb. 18-19 annual sessions by a task force recommendation to sell one of its three camps (Moose Lake) and expand existing facilities to accommodate a growing need for a different kind of retreat facility.

Not having had a chance to study this prior to the annual sessions and running into immediate resistance from Camp Moose Lake friends, the report was soon tabled. The result was a plan for congregational study of long-range camping ministries and empowerment of the CMM executive to call a special delegate conference when they feel ready to act on this issue.

An Elim Bible Institute (Altona) board resolution to continue the existing pledges set for phase one (administration building) until 1984 — even though phase one will be paid for in 1983 — and build a 32-bed dormitory in 1983 but finish paying for it from the levies already in place also frustrated the delegates. A new motion, severing relations to the existing phase one levies but adding new levies for 1984-85 to finance the dormitory, was almost unanimously passed. This will put the new campus well over the halfway mark toward total completion.

The CMM received 97 percent of its 1982 budget — the highest in some years. In spite of this achievement, the mood was conservative on the 1983 budget. Delegates raised expectations from churches by $3 per member to $50.75, making the total operating budget $1,074,000.

An agenda packed with all the usual reports also included five sermons on the theme "Living in the Kingdom — Promise and Responsibility" (Mark 1:15b). David Schroeder, Canadian Mennonite Bible College professor, laid the biblical foundation by reminding the CMM that Jesus ushered in the new kingdom with his coming. We need to stop mainly waiting for the coming fulness of the kingdom and do our part to strengthen what Jesus began on earth.

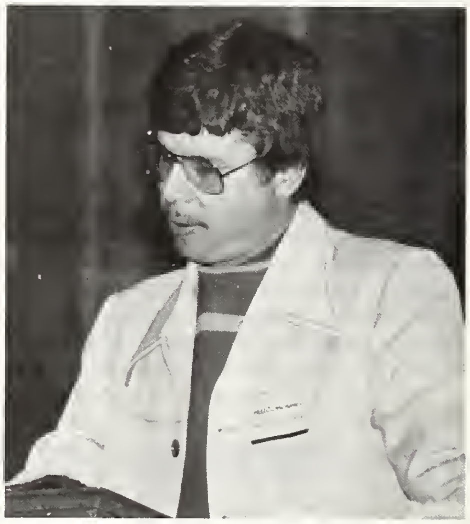
Jake R. Krause, hospital and senior citizens' chaplain, urged the CMM to more sensitively relate to and facilitate a place for the aged among us. They too are part of the kingdom and heirs of the promises.

John H. Neufeld, moderator, challenged a capacity audience with the thought that "living in the kingdom is to be out of step" with other drumbeats that beckon us, e.g. conformity, change for sake of change, state allegiance and materialism. Citing examples like John, the seer of Revelation, or Solzhenitsyn, a contemporary, Neufeld called on listeners to march to the beat of the worthy One as seen in Revelation 4-5. To do so, he said, will be out of step with most; but if need be, we can be ready to die for the worthy One.

Henry Rempel, university economics professor, held before the conference a richly creamed pumpkin pie. He said our society wants a greater share of each person's "pie," each person's time and resources. Our challenge is to determine the appropriate portions.

Jacob K. Klassen, outgoing vice moderator, reminded the CMM of Jesus sending out the 70 or 72 (Luke 10:1), and they did great kingdom things. The CMM has more than two times 70 elected and hired persons under appointment to kingdom work. Together with the support of the over 10,000 members, there is no telling what influence the conference can have for the kingdom.

Three churches — Covenant (Winkler), Portage (Portage la Prairie) and Wingham were accepted into the CMM.



Terry Burkhalter, executive secretary for camping ministries, tells delegates about the record year in the number of campers served by CMM's three camps.

Returned to the conference executive were John H. Neufeld, moderator, and Neil Heinrichs, secretary. New officers are Edwin Teichroew, vice moderator, and George Kroeker, personnel.

One closing resolution almost brought the smooth, on-time proceedings to a halt. A floor resolution called for support of the stand taken by the Canadian Catholic bishops in their statement on the Canadian economy. Vigorous discussions ensued immediately about such implications. The resolution was tabled before being brought to a vote. Its proponents urged the delegate assembly to undertake more serious involvement as congregations in such issues as abortion and nuclear armaments referenda. clear armaments referenda.

The 1984 CMM sessions will be convened a week later than usual to not conflict with the General Conference young adult convention, Perspective '84. *Bernie Wiebe*

Racial and religious violence is seriously threatening the maintenance of a peaceful, democratic and pluralistic society in America, according to a recent report by the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights. The report claims that the current poor economic conditions and a widespread perception that the government is cutting back civil rights enforcement and social programs are contributing to the survival of racism and anti-Semitism.

The lives of 20,000 children a day could be saved in developing countries within 10 years with increased use of four simple health procedures, says the annual report of UNICEF, the United Nations children's fund. The four methods are increased breast-feeding of children, oral rehydration therapy for children with diarrhea, use of growth charts by parents to monitor child growth and thereby detect hidden malnutrition, and universal immunization of children. James P. Grant, UNICEF director, underscored the need to focus attention on "hidden hunger," which he said was more widespread than actual starvation.

We are living through what one prison superintendent calls "a prison epidemic." Caused by the inability of the nation's social, educational and moral systems to keep pace with rapid change, says Carl Berry, deputy superintendent of New York's Greenhaven Correctional Facility, it is "an epidemic which is overburdened by the tendency to utilize the criminal justice system as a substitute for the necessary efforts to restructure the other failing systems."

B.C. conferees adopt 'no increase' in budget, program

Clearbrook, B.C. — Creative reporting, celebration of the new equal partnership with Columbia Bible Institute, budget cutting, acceptance of a second Chinese Mennonite church and a reported moving toward mutual reconciliation in the involuntary dismissal case between Bruno and Elizabeth Epp and the Eben Ezer congregation highlighted the 48th annual Conference of Mennonites in British Columbia sessions Feb. 11-13 at the Olivet Mennonite Church in Clearbrook.

Creative reporting began when the committee on the ministry gave a presentation about its work to the ministers, elders and deacons conference through a number of special songs. Interviews highlighted the missions/service reports. The music committee used creative hymn singing led by Linda Peters and Marvin Regier, plus a number of special musical ensembles to do its reporting. Role play, skits and drama were utilized by the youth and by Camp Squeah.

In spite of a 10 percent shortfall in 1982 budget church donations, the conference ended the year with an operating deficit of only $4,700. This was more than covered by a cash balance from the beginning of the fiscal year. The finance committee reported $145,000 raised above budget toward payment of equal ownership of CBI. The 1983 budget, however, was set at $507,000, calling for just slightly lower church donations than the 1982 budget had asked. Yet effectually, a 10 percent increase in church giving is expected to meet the "no-increase" budget.

The CM in BC has three large projects: CBI in Clearbrook, Camp Squeah near Hope, and missions/service. It was the latter that suffered most from the no increase. Its 1983 budget decreased by $14,000 from 1982.

Grace Chinese Mennonite Church, daughter congregation to the Vancouver Mennonite Church, with 32 adult members, was officially accepted as the 26th member of the conference. Daniel Cheung is the pastor.

B.C. missions service has seven churches on subsidy and is deeply engaged with Indo-Canadian and Laotian ministries by supporting staff persons in both. One subsidy church, Church of the Way at Granisle, reported near 100 percent unemployment.

Conference minister Dick Rempel spoke of a "troubling sense of disquiet" in his first year. Currently six of 26 churches are seeking pastoral leadership.

The committee on the ministry expressed gratitude for the Langley Fellowship's assistance in the process of "genuine reconciliation and forgiveness on the part of all parties concerned" in the difficulties between Bruno and Elizabeth Epp, Eben Ezer and conference staff.

Peter Retzlaff, conference moderator, Jake Elias, dean of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, and Peter Kehler, Commission on Overseas Mission secretary for Asia, each addressed the delegates on the theme "The Way that Leads to Peace" (Luke 19:42). Retzlaff challenged delegates to adopt a servanthood stance. Elias called for a "weeping compassion" for *shalom*. Kehler held before the conference a world torn apart by sin and desperately needing the healing presence and forgiving love in Jesus Christ.

A pleasant surprise to the conference was a $10,000 gift from the Evangelical Mennonite Conference, designated to the CBI Foundation from proceeds of selling a church building formerly sold by the BC conference to the EMC. It was termed a "beautiful cooperative gesture."

The CBI agreement, finalized in June 1982 at a special MB/GC convention, was called "a milestone in our Mennonite history" by the finance committee. *Bernie Wiebe*

Librarian/secretarial assistant

Elim Bible Institute is seeking a librarian/secretarial assistant on a voluntary service basis initially. Duties include book processing and library maintenance, miscellaneous typing, and editing a quarterly newsletter. Candidates should have a familiarity with books and library operations, typing skills of at least 45 wpm, an ability to relate well to people in a small setting and an appreciation for the purpose of a Bible school. Term of hiring would allow summers free. Position to commence in September 1983, with orientation during April 1983.

Address resume and references to:
Dan Zehr, principal
Elim Bible Institute
Box 120
Altona, MB R0G 0B0.

Oratorio '83

Palm Sunday presentation
of Beethoven's
Christ on the Mount of Olives
and
Mass in C Major
by
The Mennonite Oratorio Choir
accompanied by the
Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra
Conductor: George Wiebe

Date: Sunday, March 27, 3 p.m.
Place: Centennial Concert Hall
Tickets: $5, $6.50, $7.50, $8.50, $10, available at ATO, MBBC, CMBC
Sponsors:
Canadian Mennonite Bible College
George Wiebe, conductor
Mennonite Brethren Bible College
Jake Klassen, conductor

Mar. 15 '83

Committees have been organized to have an all-Saskatchewan conscientious objectors of World War II reunion Aug. 19-20 at Rosthern (Sask.) Junior College, jointly with the Saskatchewan Youth Organization and other young people. Those interested should contact A. J. Funk, Box 166, Laird, SK S0K 2H0.

Radio spots addressing the myth that nuclear arms create security are now available for congregational leaders to place on their local stations, reports Lois Hertzler, coordinator of distribution for Mennonite Media Services, Harrisonburg, Va. Narrator David W. Augsburger has worked with faculty and students of the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Ind., to pinpoint specific moral dilemmas concerning militarism and the nuclear question and to suggest a Jesus kind of response. To reserve placement on local radio stations, write to Lois Hertzler, Mennonite Media Services, 1251 Virginia Ave., Harrisonburg, VA 22801.

"Unity in Community" was the theme of a midwinter retreat for students and staff of Elim Bible Institute, Altona, Man., Feb. 2-4 at Camp Assiniboia, west of Winnipeg. Glen Horst, professor of practical theology at Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg, led the students and staff in four sessions on various issues relating to the retreat theme. Students shared experiences of traveling to off-campus study-service internships during the January intersemester.

Budget, Christian education top Ontario conference agenda

Virgil, Ont. — Key issues at the Conference of United Mennonite Churches of Ontario were the budget and funding for Christian education. The conference's annual session Feb. 18-20 at the Niagara United Mennonite Church, approved a budget of $278,250 for 1983, a commitment for the participating congregations of $55 per member.

The education committee was challenged for its emphasis on the three private secondary schools in the province, without providing support for Christian teachers employed in other institutions. After heated discussion, delegates moved to adopt the proposal that funding priorities be given first to the three Mennonite schools in Ontario — United Mennonite Educational Institute in Leamington, Rockway Mennonite School in Kitchener and Eden Mennonite Christian School in Niagara — and then secondarily to other Ontario schools and Anabaptist/Mennonite programs.

Hugo and Doreen Neufeld, directors of Welcome Inn, report through a role play.

The missions and service committee report was highlighted by a moving dialogue between Welcome Inn's codirectors, Hugo and Doreen Neufeld, regarding events of the preceding year. Other missions reports included the Toronto Chinese Mennonite Church with its growing youth ministry; the Leamington Mennonite Home, where government restraints have resulted in a freeze in the number of beds; and the United Mennonite Home for the Aged, Vineland. MCC (Ontario) informed the constituency that in order to sustain its present commitment of forwarding 80 percent of contributions to MCC (Canada) the flow of financial resources must remain consistent. The minister of the Lao Christian Fellowship in St. Catharines, Tong Chitchalerntham, gave his testimony and a brief report.

The reports from postsecondary schools supported the concept of the special opportunities afforded by Mennonite schools for fostering Christian education. Paul Enns, speaking for Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, began by saying, "Secular education can make men clever, but can never make them good," a quote discussed by many during breaks. Significant in his report was the announcement of the phasing out of the School for Adult Studies in favor of more off-campus courses.

Speaking to the theme "Discipling in Lifestyles," John H. Redekop, professor of economics and political science at Wilfred Laurier University, Waterloo, probed in two addresses the ramifications and expression of the altered lifestyle we are called to in Christ. "The altered lifestyle, in itself, will not produce Christlikeness," he said. "A godly lifestyle does not just happen — it requires exercise, discipline and perseverance." The onus is on the believer in "training oneself to be godly." It will involve, said Redekop, dealing with the total person in areas such as combating racism, practicing the spirit of Christ rather than the letter of the law, and developing an attitude of gratitude, no matter what the circumstances.

The passing of a resolution calling the conference body, as well as individuals, to write letters to the government urging disarmament and rejection of cruise missile testing brought the 1983 conference to an end.

The North Leamington Church will host the 1984 conference, scheduled for Feb. 24-26 next year. *Louise Dueck*

Maintenance coordinator

Elim Bible Institute is seeking a maintenance coordinator on a voluntary service basis initially. Duties include coordination of all janitorial work in the school; maintaining and repairing, if necessary, all campus buildings and equipment, ordering cleaning and maintenance supplies, etc. Candidates should have skill in carpentry and repair work, abilities to relate well to people in a small setting and an appreciation for the purpose of a Bible school. Position to commence in September 1983, though must be determined by April 1983.

Address resume and references to:
Dan Zehr, principal
Elim Bible Institute
Box 120
Altona, MB R0G 0B0.

Conference youth minister

The Atlantic Coast Conference is looking for a youth minister to serve on a one-half-time basis. The Eastern Pennsylvania area offers a variety of possibilities to supplement this part-time assignment, including nearby seminaries for further study. The position is open in September 1983.

Interested candidates should send a resume. Further information and application forms are available on request.

Contact:
Dale L. Weaver
3442 Harvest Drive
Gordonville, PA 17529.

The Swiss Mennonite Church contributed over $37,000 during their Christmas fund drive to the Mennonite Central Committee project in Guazapa, El Salvador. That project helps people displaced by civil war. The money will aid approximately 600 displaced people in Guazapa for one year. The project currently provides meals for 60-80 malnourished children, a weekly clinic and a bed-building project and upgrades inadequate housing. Recently, agricultural help, including the rental of land, providing seeds and fertilizer was initiated to encourage the farming families to raise some of their own food.

A displaced Salvadoran mother gives her child a drink of milk at the child nutrition center set up by the Beachy Amish church and MCC in Guazapa, El Salvador.

The slave trade is being revived in China, reports United Press International. The reports indicate that boys, girls and women in remote rural areas are being kidnapped and sold "in faraway places." Observers speculate China's recent moves to allow farmers to make a limited profit on production and the strict limits on the number of children couples may have helped revive the ancient custom to meet increased demand for extra labor.

Epp resignation provokes questions at conferences

Winnipeg (GCMC) — The resignation of Canadian Mennonite Bible College president George K. Epp during the Canadian conference's annual Council of Boards sessions on Feb. 5 has provoked considerable discussion within its constituency about the reasons for his decision.

Although the CMBC board of directors accepted with regret Epp's resignation on Feb. 5, it pursued extensive talks with the president throughout the ensuing two weeks in hopes of persuading him to reconsider the move or take a different administrative and/or teaching position with the college. In a Feb. 22 statement, the board stated that "after a good process of dialogue, no change was negotiated and Dr. Epp's resignation will become effective July 31, 1983."

Public speculation about the reasons for Epp's decision so soon after accepting a second five-year term as president intensified when no reasons for the move were formally stated immediately after Feb. 5. The confusion increased when reporting at both the Manitoba and Ontario annual conference sessions on Feb. 18-19 included conflicting accounts about Epp's acceptance of a second term and his decision to resign.

A week earlier at the Conference of Mennonites in British Columbia annual sessions in Clearbrook, Ron Loeppky, CMBC business manager, reported that Epp "did not want to cloud the Council of Boards discussions and therefore requested that the board not make the resignation announcement to the plenary session.

"George indicated early in his term that teaching was his 'first love.' During the last five years he has been able to teach only one course per year. He has often regretted not being able to spend more time teaching.

"In commenting on his resignation, I feel that one area in which we as faculty and staff failed was not giving him enough affirmation for the excellent work he was doing. It is so easy to be involved in our own areas and forget that the person beside us needs to know that he is appreciated for what he is doing."

The CMBC board is initiating the process of searching for a new president.

Mennonite Disaster Service all-unit meeting in Alberta

Winnipeg (MCC Canada) — "Mennonite Disaster Service exists for people." These words set the tone for the annual All-Unit gathering of MDS, meeting in Coaldale/Lethbridge, Alta., Feb. 11-12. The main speaker, Frank C. Peters, pastor of Portage Avenue Mennonite Brethren Church in Winnipeg, traced significant events in Jesus' ministry, where he illustrated His priorities in placing people before things (wealth).

Peters went on to say that people should remain the prime concern of the church, specifically a ministry to the total person. He challenged delegates to see MDS existing in order to respond to natural disasters, yes, but basically ministering to people's needs as they experience great loss. Peters concluded by suggesting that being an example in service is important, but volunteers must also be prepared to translate their actions into a verbal witness.

The two-day meeting also heard reports from MDS regional leaders and volunteers, from units across the United States and Canada. It became clear in these reports that MDS remains occupied with special projects, in the absence of natural disasters. Volunteers have been involved in various community projects.

North American Mennonite Youth Gathering

BETHLEHEM '83

- For youth from Mennonite and General Conference Mennonite churches.
- Scheduled for Aug. 1-7, 1983, at Lehigh University in Bethlehem.
- Registration will be limited to 2,000. Forms were to be mailed to congregations by Feb. 1.
- Cost for this week-long event will be $156, plus transportation.

If you have questions/suggestions — write or phone:

Jo Bontrager
Bethlehem '83 Youth Gathering
Box 1245
Elkhart, IN 46515-1245
219/294-7536

Prepared by

COE

Commission on Education
General Conference
Mennonite Church
Box 347, Newton, KS 67114

Dentists and other health professionals have mounted a campaign in Wichita, Kan., to convince students in the city's junior high and senior high schools of the health dangers from chewing tobacco.

"Ethical Dimensions of Rising Health-Care Costs" is the theme of the 1983 convention of the Mennonite Medical Association-Mennonite Nurses Association, to be held July 28-31 at the Laurelville Mennonite Church Center near Mt. Pleasant, Pa. Laban Peachey will introduce the issues of the convention, and Katie Funk Wiebe will give a banquet address. For reservations contact Emilie Seitz, 3003 Benham Ave., Elkhart, IN 46517; phone 219/295-3726.

John Rempel is offering to send copies of *Der Bote* and *Mennonitische Rundschau* to anyone interested, in exchange for mailing costs. He says he has "almost all the issues" of the two German periodicals from 1965 to 1982. He may be contacted by writing Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, ON N2L 2R7, or calling 519/885-0220 or 519/886-1755.

Church leaders apply the brakes to Menno Simons College

Winnipeg — Talk about a new inter-Mennonite "Menno Simons College" took several turns at the Feb. 5 meeting of the MSC provisional board of governors. The meeting was well attended by invited representatives from the existing Mennonite colleges — Canadian Mennonite Bible College and Mennonite Brethren Bible College (Winnipeg) and Steinbach (Man.) Bible College — Evangelical Mennonite Mission Conference education chairman, Mennonite Brethren Canadian conference moderator and the chairman of higher learning, Conference of Mennonites in Canada moderator and general secretary.

The meeting began with Frank H. Epp, consultant to the MSC board, reviewing steps from the first formal discussion in 1980 to the June 1982 obtaining of a charter through Bill 34 from the government of Manitoba by an act to incorporate "Menno Simons College . . . for the education of students and the promotion of knowledge according to the principles of the Mennonite religion." It also gives power to grant degrees, including honorary degrees and, if the college so desires, affiliation with any Manitoba university.

Epp's paper included a proposition from the MSC board to "formulate action . . . leading to the opening of an all-Mennonite college in Winnipeg preferably no later than September of 1985. . . ."

A further "memorandum of recommendation" from the "executive of MSC" was then read. It urged affiliation with the University of Winnipeg or the University of Manitoba and entitlement to grants from the University Grants Commission. To move this along the David Friesen Family Foundation pledged $250,000 to hire a director of development and pay costs until MSC could become operational.

Lawyer Robert Friesen had made some initial contacts with the University Grants Commission and outlined his findings. MSC board chairman David Friesen then opened the agenda for discussion.

A. J. Thiessen, another MSC board member, had all 16 people present down to serious business quickly when he asked, "Could we have expressions of opinion around the table about potential for an all-Mennonite college?"

Ed Reimer, SBC board member, was the first to respond. "We are afraid of negative reaction if it would seem that MSC might swallow our existing college. But I do feel there is a place for a liberal arts college besides our Bible colleges."

From there it took some time to pick up on Reimer's second statement. D. E. Redekop, MB moderator, felt they knew little about MSC and could not promise any early support. Jake Fransen, CMC moderator, said they would not want to lose the advantages of CMBC and at this point could not see how MSC might relate to CMC. MBBC president David Ewert added that he couldn't imagine better relationships for MBBC than what they now have with the University of Winnipeg. Larry Kehler, CMC general secretary, expressed his reading of conference constituency as not needing Menno Simons College.

By this time the chairman had already said, "This effectually puts MSC on hold. We can further explore grants possibilities. And the charter can be used at any time."

A summary statement approved by the total group said four things about this meeting: (1) existing Mennonite colleges were strongly affirmed, (2) there is a hope and need for greater cooperation in Mennonite education, (3) there is gratitude for the MSC group's larger vision of Mennonite education and their initiatives. There is also a need for more research about students and about college models, and (4) special gratitude is due David Friesen, the whole MSC board and other Friends of Higher Learning.

To the agenda item "next meeting" chairman Friesen asked for a motion to ". . . an indefinite adjournment of MSC provisional board of governors." MSC board member Neil Fast so moved, and the resolution was unanimously approved. *Bernie Wiebe*

Teacher needed

Teacher needed for lower elementary grades at **Hwalien Christian School in Taiwan**. Training in music is desired. Instruction is in English. Availability of two-three years is preferable.

If interested, write or phone:
Personnel secretary
Commission on Overseas Mission
Box 347
Newton, KS 67114
316/283-5100.

Administrative secretary

Elim Bible Institute is seeking a full-time administrative secretary beginning June 15, 1983. The successful applicant must possess skills and experience in basic office procedures (typing at 50-60 wpm, filing, operating office machines), bookkeeping and drawing up budgets. This job also requires initiative, people-related skills, capabilities in working independently and decision making. The ability to relate well to people in a small setting and an appreciation for the purpose of a Bible school is important as well.

Address resume and references to:
Dan Zehr, principal
Elim Bible Institute
Box 120
Altona, MB R0G 0B0.

After summer drought
in India
the rains came,
bringing destruction
instead of gentle
relief, displacing
10 million people.

Church groups
have joined to assist
in reconstruction.
MCC is rebuilding
10 schools and
sending 2500 metric
tons of wheat for a
food-for-work project,
part of a larger MCC
shipment to India.

Your support to MCC
is a way to care
for those who must
rebuild again.

...and the rains came

Mennonite Central Committee, 21 South 12th Street, Akron, Pennsylvania 17501
MCC (Canada), 201-1483 Pembina Highway, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3T 2C8

Prayers from South India

Dr. Wiebe, you may remember our meeting in summer 1980 at Darjeeling, India, where I along with my wife came to share with you in leading the retreat for the Mennonite voluntary workers from India, Bangladesh and Nepal. I still remember you and often our acquaintance is being renewed through *The Mennonite*, which I get regularly, although rather late.

Today (Jan. 8) the July 6, 1982, issue arrived and I was again moved by the testimony of a father who lost his dear son Glen — and that in an abnormal way. I thank God for the faith and courage you have expressed in the editorials. I particularly note a spirit of optimism and goodness in your recollections of the past. Quite often people lament over the loss, but very few pick up the blessings of God and give thanks for them.

I assure you of our prayers for your family that the Lord may sustain your faith and strengthen you in the work you do on his behalf.

I have become the principal of this institution (Mar Thoma Theological Seminary) where we have 44 graduates preparing for the ministry. *The Mennonite* editorials are an inspiration for our whole theological community. *Dr. K. V. Mathew, Post Bag #287, KOTTAYAM-685, Kerala, South India*

Jan. 28

Incarnation is a model

The Feb. 1 editorial "For God's Sake and for Our Sakes" is marvelous. I've come to appreciate in the last few years how the incarnation is a model for Christian life. Your editorial pushes that into some new areas for me. *John Linscheid, 924 Louisiana #2, Lawrence, KS 66044*

Feb. 7

Thrilled by MVS issue

I read the Feb. 1 issue from cover to cover the day I got it. What a marvelous piece of work put together by many! Voluntary service is treated in such a deserving and meaningful way.

The quality of thought and writing skill thrilled and gripped me. Marilyn Fenn and Lila Gracey bared the very center of their being. I felt the pain of injustice and neglect; I also felt the guilt.

The news of the Community Mennonite Church in Markham, Ill., courageously breaking new ground also caught my attention. They have joined the Chicago area churches in giving sanctuary to refugees. It made me recall the statement by a parishioner in *The Other Side* (February issue) concerning the sanctuary issue: "The civil government is not going to tell me as a Christian the limits to my compassion. The gospel is clear about its demands and we must be too."

Thank God for the bright lights among us. May they be a virus that becomes extremely contagious. Never in my 81 years have opportunities been greater. *Mrs. D. P. Ewert, 309 S. Cedar, Hillsboro, KS 67063*

Feb. 7

Find it inspiring

I join the growing number of readers who are finding *The Mennonite* an inspiring publication. Your New Year's editorial ("Catholic Used Car Dealer . . .") and the Feb. 1 editorial ("For God's Sake and for Our Sakes") were especially inspired. The special issue on MVS (Feb. 1) was well done, including the artwork and two-color production. *Leland Harder, associate director, Institute of Mennonite Studies, 3003 Benham Ave., Elkhart, IN 46517*

Feb. 10

Refreshing to my spirit

Recently I was visiting an elderly couple in Chilliwack, B.C. I noticed *The Mennonite* lying on their coffee table, along with several other church periodicals. Pointing to *The Mennonite*, this grandmother said, "In that one, I always read the last page first." I smiled and said, "Me too." And I want to thank you for your refreshingly honest editorials, refreshing to my spirit because they help me become more honest with myself. *Betty Mae Dyck, 1225 Debeck Road, Penticton, BC V2A 3Z3*

Feb. 11

To school 50 years later

In the late summer of 1981 my daughters challenged me to take a course at Bethel College. With my wife's support, I enrolled in a night class, "A Study of Old Testament Prophets," taught by Perry Yoder. He made it clear that one objective was to help us identify true prophets now.

I had never been too interested in prophets and prophecy because too often I'd only heard "gloom and doom." My only involvement in present-day prophecy was that I prophesied — with certainty — on a hot summer morning at our breakfast table when the crop yield had been poor or the prices were low, or both, that we would soon have a notice from our banker advising me that we needed to have a heart to heart talk.

I had not been in a classroom since my high school days 50 years ago. Nevertheless it was an unforgettable experience. May I share some observations?

I do not have the luxury that the men who compiled the Old Testament had. They could look back hundreds of years, read the writings of the sages and determine whose prophecies had stood the test of time. (The activities and sermons were preserved in writing, either by the prophets themselves or their scribes or somebody else.)

The prophets were called by God. Most of them reported a vision of some kind. Some were priests in Israel's religious structure. They interceded before God for the people and came back from their communion with God saying, "Thus saith the Lord."

They knew the law and the will of God. They quoted Deuteronomy. They championed the poor, the widows, the orphans, the oppressed. They criticized the rich and the rulers (kings) for the above sins and for living in luxury while exploiting the poor. They said, "The Lord God is King," and pronounced judgment on the sins of those who seemed to follow other kings. "Gloom and doom," yes, but the light of God also shone through.

Many had a rough time during their ministry. They were often severely persecuted, misunderstood, and some were killed. Some prophets were well-to-do; others were poor. Some prophesied in the king's court or as priests.

When Jesus Christ announced his ministry (Luke 4:16-20), he read from Isaiah. It was about the social gospel and the spiritual gospel integrated (social justice and the new kingdom of God — evangelism — good news), and he said, "That's me."

One extracurricular observation: Moses, John the Baptist, Jesus Christ, Paul and John the seer of Revelation all had desert and wilderness experiences.

August Duerksen, Route 2, Box 34, Hillsboro, KS 67063

Feb. 14

A pastor's heart

I continue to appreciate the fine work of *The Mennonite.* The content is solid and relevant to a wide range of church concerns. It reflects a pastor's heart which speaks to the needs of our congregations. *Heinz Janzen, pastoral team, Trinity Mennonite Church, 211 S. Elm, Hillsboro, KS 67063.*

Feb. 14

It keeps getting better

Thank you for the excellent job with *The Mennonite.* Seems to me it keeps getting better.

I especially appreciated the Aug. 3, 1982, issue on unity and liberty in the church. Also the deeply moving and spiritually challenging lead article in the Jan. 4 issue by Karren Boehr. *Frank Horst, pastor, Spring Valley Mennonite Church, Route 2, Box 725, Newport, WA 99156*

Feb. 14

MVS issue outstanding

The Feb. 1 MVS issue is one of the outstanding issues of the past year. It captures the spirit of voluntarism in a unique way through articles by David Orr, Marilyn Fenn and Lila Gracey. The poetry of "old reliables" Peter Ediger and Chuck Neufeld also does much to enhance that issue. I agree wholeheartedly with Lynn Keenan that "lives are changed in VS" because our God becomes bigger and our personal interests become smaller.

Let us have more of this kind of reporting in which our young people and others in the Lord's work tell the church what God is doing in their lives. *William T. Snyder, special assistant to the executive secretary, MCC, 21 S. 12th St., Akron, PA 17501*

Feb. 15

Self-proclaimed peace man

The self-proclaimed peace man who degrades his foes with his slanderous remarks — through which enmity grows — creates hate and ill-will in the hearts of his foes. Then too, this slander he hurls at his foes spurs his own subjects to distrust and loathe his viscously slandered and degraded foes.

Yet since hate and ill-will are destroyers of peace, contentions and wars are bound to increase, through mudslinging peace man's promotion of peace. *Vernon Stucky, Hesston, KS 67062*

Feb. 15

On right direction

I work closely with the director of the voluntary service program in Mennonite Board of Missions and read with great interest and enthusiasm the articles that were included in the Feb. 1 MVS issue. I respond with warm appreciation for the way you tell the story and allow that to be the confronting way to get through to people. I agree with Henri Nouwen, who says that we do our best teaching and preaching by the telling of stories because they always inspire or confront persons at the level at which they are able to hear and respond.

I especially found the article "Compassion Doesn't Get Easy" by Marilyn F. Fenn to be that kind of confronting and inspiring to me.

Thanks for giving this kind of publicity to the MVS program. It's inviting and catches the imagination of those who are open and listening to what the Spirit wants to say.

God's best to *The Mennonite.* I think you're on the right direction as you plan the projected articles for 1983. The note in the letters section indicated good planning. I think there is a basic renewed interest in prayer and personal-life-in-Christ discipleship. I'm grateful to see your focus on that in the future. *Mary Herr, director of Service Ministries, Mennonite Board of Missions, Box 370, Elkhart, IN 46515*

Feb. 17

Photo gives wrong message

Being MCC workers overseas means we receive *The Mennonite* quite late. But I register my concern over the photo which accompanied the poem "Making a Difference" (Nov. 23, 1982, issue).

The photo depicts a severely malnourished black child, obviously near the point of death. Bending over the prostrate child is a white woman with a concerned look on her face. It appears that the purpose of the photo is to encourage readers to be more sympathetic to the many suffering people in this world.

However, the photo is in a subtle way racist and colonialist. It is the black child who is pictured as poor, weak and starving, while the white person is strong and healthy. The child is completely passive, thus implying that the poor are unable to help themselves. The concerned white woman bending over the helpless black child subtly conveys the message that we whites are superior and have the answers. The reality is often that we whites are the problem, not the solution. For example, our desire for cheap sugar and Dole and Del Monte canned pineapple means that thousands of families here in the Philippines have lost the farmland they once depended on for their livelihood.

Another problem with the photo is that it violates the human dignity of the suffering person. I would not suggest that we should be spared images of suffering and deprivation, but this must be done sensitively. Our church papers do not print pictures of white children or white elderly people in agony or near death because of some horrible disease or accident. Pictures of whites who may be experiencing deep pain generally maintain the human dignity of the subjects.

I am requesting greater discernment in the choice of photos. Please continue to encourage readers to become more responsive to the needs of the world. *Dan Epp-Tiessen, MCC, Rodano St., Malaybalay, Philippines*

Feb. 21

Resent your editing

As a citizen and veteran of World War II, I resent your biased method of editing my letter (Feb. 15 issue). I am entitled to express myself.

I believe my point was made regardless of the hatchet job on my letter. But you denied me the originality of my message by your editing on some of the things I wanted to point out.

The homosexual issue is being accepted in every walk of life, in various churches. When public acceptance and our churches bow to such a cesspool of immorality, we have lost our savor as Christians and are good for nothing, except to be trodden underfoot. So I hardly see how you qualify as an editor. *O. O. Anderson, 704 W. Grand, Hillsboro, KS 67063*

Feb. 22

We visited Mennonite country

Marvin Zehr

Leaving on an eight-week visit to 50 General Conference congregations brings with it much scurrying to complete packing, making arrangements for all that needs to be cared for during your absence, and finally saying goodbyes.

It's over the hills to Pennsylvania, then northwest with stops in Minnesota, South and North Dakota, Montana, Saskatchewan, Alberta and Washington. Thousands of miles over mountains, across rivers, zigzagging through bumper-to-bumper big-city traffic.

This is Mennonite country. In these places our brothers and sisters in Christ — who congregate under the name Mennonite — work, play, cry, pray, celebrate and worship.

Small white-shingle buildings nestled in green foliage and rolling mountains. Modern brick structures planned with much thought to Mennonite theology. A converted army barracks. Sanctuary, fellowship hall and volleyball court all in one.

Picnic tables in a city park shelter. Three sections built at different times, recording the growth and vitality of a congregation, all tied together in an attractive, steepled structure.

Church parking lots and building exteriors adapted for outdoor, summer, drive-in services. Brick walls sporting graffiti surrounded by pavement scattered with broken bottles.

Pews padded with corduroy. Pews built of three-inch-wide boards, separated by three-inch spaces. Sanctuary fronts proclaiming English and German Bible verses.

A remodeled Catholic nunnery now serving as worship center, school, housing, offices, library and more. Tumbleweed, volcanic ash and miles and miles of wide open space, then an oasis of green grass, blooming rose bushes, lush trees and bushes, surround a white house and a church building.

This also is Mennonite country — where our brothers and sisters of the General Conference gather to worship, share, sing, pray and grow in Christ.

Feeling the joy of answered prayer with one whose bleeding ulcers were miraculously gone when the surgeon opened her to perform surgery. Over quiche sharing with a pastor's wife who is excited about her social work position in an insurance agency.

Hearing the exciting report of parents of a missionary recently returned from a visit in their daughter's African home. Experiencing the enthusiasm of a Bible institute staff member as she takes us on a tour of their facilities.

Hearing the hurts of parents whose children have turned their backs on the church. Sitting around breakfast tables in local restaurants sharing concerns, answering questions, learning to know one another.

Sharing in the enthusiasm of a young couple who have just arrived in their first pastorate, along with the anticipated arrival of their first baby. Cleaning gooseberries around a kitchen table as part of a large, warm family.

Learning about large-scale farming in Saskatchewan, irrigation in Washington state and apple growing in Pennsylvania. Over borscht feeling the pain of broken family relationships. Recalling church planting questions and experiences with a couple who started several churches.

Sensing the pride and enthusiasm of workers in a variety of thrift shops. Crying with a couple who is ministering to a woman with severe disabilities and little desire to live. Rejoicing with a congregation about to dedicate new facilities and celebrate their 25th anniversary.

Realizing that even though we sometimes disagree about some issues in our conference, when it comes to basic commitment to Christ and caring about our Mennonite heritage, we are very much in agreement.

These are God's people. These are *our* people — brothers and sisters in Christ congregating under the name Mennonite, going out to serve in his name — growing, seeking, sharing, loving. In him we are one. *Third in a series of reports on Marvin and Jeannie Zehr's sabbatical visits among General Conference churches*

Unreached tribe is reached

Leighton Ford

A while ago I heard a tremendously encouraging story that I *must* share with you — the story of the Cholanaikkans.

In 1972 woodcutters working near the Mangeri Hills in India reported sighting a tribe of naked, fairskinned people living in caves.

Curious newsmen took the woodcutters as guides and set out to investigate. As they approached the hill area they saw a group of men, women and children, without clothing, sitting around an open fire. As they came closer, the Cholanaikkans ran and hid.

Soon some of the stronger men began to come out of the caves. The newsmen became frightened but moved closer and eventually began communicating by using sign language.

The Cholanaikkans were living in caves because they were afraid of wild elephants. They ate fruits, vegetables and wild honey. They never bathed, cleaned their teeth or shaved. When it was cold, they wrapped themselves in the bark of trees.

This same year, preparation had already begun on an Unreached Peoples Directory for the 1974 Lausanne Congress on World Evangelization. Because of the report written by the newsmen, the Cholanaikkans were "discovered" and listed along with thousands of other unreached people groups.

As information from the directory spread, a group of concerned Christians living near the Cholanaikkans began to pray specifically for this unreached group. They realized their responsibility for reaching the Cholanaikkans, so they formed an organization called Tribal Mission.

The Cholanaikkans lived deep in the hills of the forest and it took the newly formed group a full day to reach them on foot. As they approached, the tribal group was again frightened by outsiders wearing clothes and they ran and hid. The Christians then devised a strategy. They took off their shirts and trousers, leaving only their waists covered, and continued on.

After repeated visits, the believers began to win the confidence of the Cholanaikkans. They cleaned their wounds, gave baths to their children, applied ointment to diseased skin and taught them to wear clothes. They brought them food and tablets for headaches. They knew they had to meet both the physical and spiritual needs of the Cholanaikkans.

The Cholanaikkan children began to attend a small school where they were taught stories and songs. Pictures were used to share the gospel story. And a number of both adults and children began to understand and accepted Jesus Christ as their personal Savior.

By their third year of ministry, the Tribal Mission was able to buy land and build a small place of worship and a medical center. The place of worship is the center of activity for the Cholanaikkan community. Over 50 people attend the regular worship services and more than half are baptized believers.

Most of the Cholanaikkans no longer live in caves. Their whole standard of living has been changed because a group of believers cared enough to reach out to a lost and hurting people.

I tell you the story of the Cholanaikkans because it represents the type of evangelistic activity we are trying to generate. First, information was shared — the Cholanaikkans were listed in the Unreached Peoples Directory and interest began to build. Second, Christians from several different backgrounds began to pray, plan and work together; ultimately they formed the Tribal Mission. And third, they developed a strategy to reach the Cholanaikkans for Jesus Christ. *from the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization, November 1982*

Minister needed

Position of leading minister available at **First United Mennonite Church, Vancouver**. Must be bilingual.

Respond to:
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3320 Phillips Ave.
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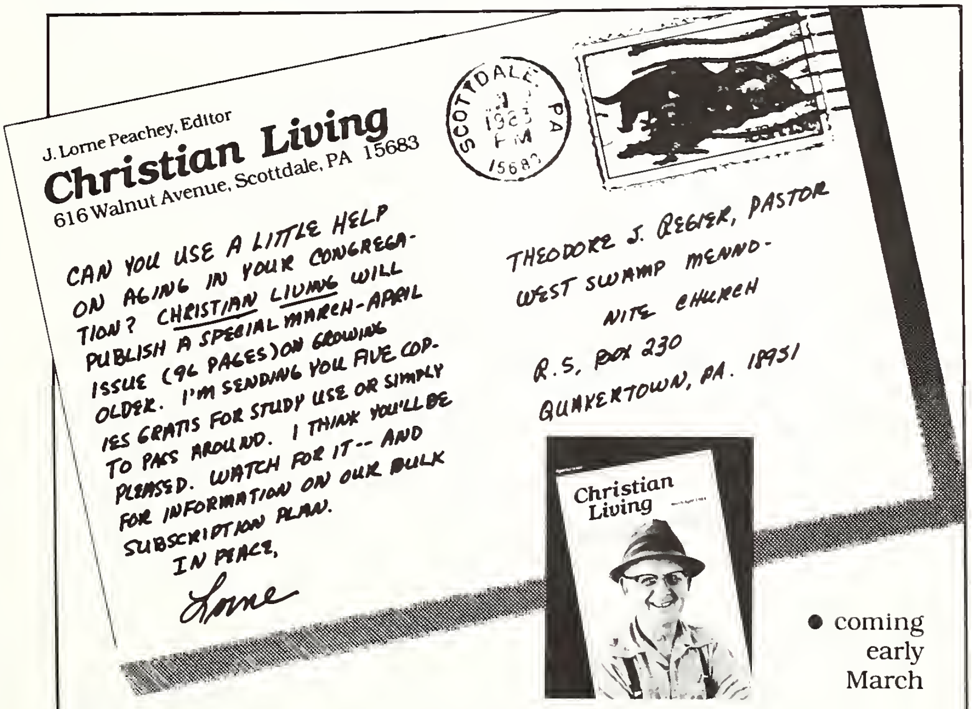

J. Lorne Peachey, Editor
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616 Walnut Avenue, Scottdale, PA 15683

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books

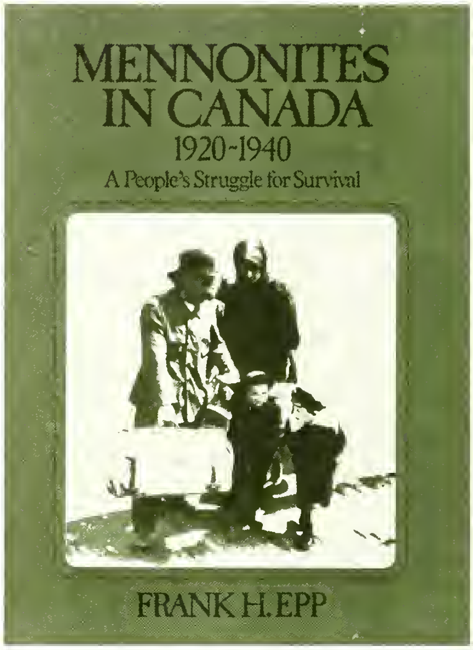
Two difficult decades

Mennonites in Canada, 1920-1940: A People's Struggle for Survival, *by Frank H. Epp (Macmillan, 1982, 640 pages)*

Reviewed by Gerald Friesen, professor of history, St. Paul's College, 430 Dysart Road, Winnipeg, MB R3T 2M6

Canadian Mennonites will be pleased by the second installment of Frank Epp's history. The new volume is a thorough, forthright and thoughtful appreciation of the Mennonite experience. Its length may seem forbidding, but the prose is fluent, the detail is not excessive when one considers the range and complexity of the issues, and the story is always interesting. The book is a firm foundation for future scholarship and a stimulating review of two exceptionally difficult decades in Mennonite life.

The organization of the book is chronological and thematic. It discusses the rise of fundamentalist Christian thought in the 20th century and its impact, especially in Ontario. It examines at length the emigration of 6,000 Mennonites to Mexico and nearly 2,000 to Paraguay in the 1920s, and the arrival of about 20,000 from Russia in the same period. In two long chapters it surveys the new agencies and settlements created by this population change — the Land Settlement Board, the irrigation experiments, the communities in Peace River and Reesor and Yarrow — and the new congregations arising from Russlaender-Kanadier differences. One shocking episode in Canadian immigration history — the 1929-30 decision to refuse entry to 15,000 or more Mennonites who had already abandoned their homes in the Soviet Union — is examined within the larger story of the trials of Russian Mennonites in the early years of Stalin's rule. The economy of Canada's Mennonite communities in the Depression and the failure of several Mennonite economic institutions (especially two Manitoba Waisenamts) receive a full dissection. The increasing division of the Mennonite community between General Conference and Brethren and the rise of yet other movements — especially the Evangelicals and the Rudnerweider — and of new divisions in the established churches such as those among the Old Order are chronicled with precision.



One entire chapter focuses upon young adults — including youth movements, Bible schools, city hostels, sex education, university — and the debates about how the faith of these young people could be reinforced. Another chapter outlines the debate over Mennonite culture and especially which aspects were essential to Mennonitism, including a non-conformist lifestyle, the German language and German ethnicity. The last chapter surveys the variety of Mennonite viewpoints upon the world at the end of the two decades — the Pro-German and Nazi, the dispensationalist, the Anabaptist and the pacifist or non-resistance perspectives in particular.

Epp emphasizes that, even in the 1930s, during a time of severe challenges to the faith and the institutions of the Mennonite people, Mennonites possessed important unifying elements: a common theological heritage, a common historical experience and a common preference for separation from the larger society in which they dwelt. Though he might have concentrated exclusively upon disunity in the Mennonite community, Epp prefers to treat the schisms and divisons as if they offered "potential for cooperation."

The book is huge, yet it leaves untouched many issues in the Mennonite experience. Epp is interested in Mennonite survival. Thus, his questions are organized to demonstrate how churches splintered, when communities grew and what were topics for debate among the committed. One might well ask whether the story would change if Epp concentrated upon Mennonite adaptation to a Canadian norm.

This is a work of contention. It is itself a contribution to the debate about Mennonite identity and Mennonite roles. The volume ends with Epp's assertion that the elements which once separated Mennonites from the larger world had, by 1940, ceased to be important. Geographical isolation was impossible. So too was the church's institutional isolation; theologies such as dispensationalism and quietism were irrelevant in the new age, he contends. By 1939, however, Mennonites were still divided among themselves.

This book is Frank Epp's Christian witness, to use the language of the church. He has tried to present the Christian message as it should be understood by members of the Mennonite community today. It is a most impressive volume.

A songbook to be seen

The Mennonite Hymnal, Large Letter Edition *(Faith and Life Press, 1982, 640 pages)*

Reviewed by Eldon W. Graber, late co-director of Inter-Mennonite Council on Aging, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114

Who hasn't wished for a songbook to help those whose eyes have grown dim, the partially sighted or those with developmental sight problems? Now we have something to put into people's hands. All 640 pages of *The Mennonite Hymnal* used in several Mennonite denominational bodies have been published with large print and large notes.

The size of the book is 8½ by 11 inches and only slightly thicker than the regular hymnal. The book is complete with worship helps and responsive readings in large print.

Every congregation should purchase several copies and place them in the pews frequented by the elderly in their midst. To see their faces light up when they recognize a familiar hymn and are actually able to read the words will be reward enough. Bound in a distinctive brown binding, the large print hymnal would make an excellent gift for a loved one.

MEDITATION

Letter to a close friend

You showed me God today.

You're probably wondering how you, an ordinary person, were able to do that in an ordinary day.

What happened between us today suddenly focused for me an understanding of how God relates to me as a person who is part of his creation.

I noticed today that there was something big on your mind — it was written all over your face. You knew I was willing to listen to you, but you didn't want to talk about it at that time. So we went our separate ways for the rest of the day.

But I couldn't stop thinking about you and suddenly remembered a similar incident from last year.

I had something big on my mind (like you do today) and it was also written all over my face. A friend and I were talking, and the topic turned to me. I wasn't willing to share my preoccupation and I left the room. When I returned, I discovered that my friend had not been able to concentrate on his work; he had been preoccupied with my problem. At that time I resented his caring and interest. Yet, looking back now from the perspective of being your friend and therefore sharing your problems, concerns and joys, I can see why that friend showed interest and concern in me.

A friend's concern in sharing a concern that I have or my concern as a friend in sharing your concern seems to me a way to understand how God cares for us and is concerned about what we are experiencing even when we choose not to share it with him. In that way I can see God cares very much for me and you even when we don't go to him.

So, you showed me God today by helping me realize that my concern for you as a friend is in a small way like the concern God has for us as his children.

Brenda Suderman

Time

In a room full of people,
people busily chatting,
having just enjoyed a sing-along,
she sat alone —
"My, this is a busy time," said one;
another nodded in agreement,
"We should meet like this more often."
"Wouldn't that be good?"
In her chair, still alone —
A younger person, seeing her,
approached, leaned down saying,
"Almost came to visit you,
but there was the TV special. . . ."
Still alone, hardly hearing the empty words —
She smiled politely.
Hollow busy-ness,
Rushing, goal-less
From here to where?
Time: servant? master?
Relationships — with people and our Lord,
Time of end-less value.

Robert G. Nickel

CONTENTS

We are again in the pre-Easter season. How do we give special observance to this reminder of the growing resistance to Jesus' ministry — especially among the religious leaders? Would we be part of the fickle Palm Sunday crowd? Or are we learning more about the meaning of Jesus' life and teachings for our total lives? This issue is dedicated to help us face some of the unusual challenges from Jesus.

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EDITORIAL

The mystery of Palm Sunday

Here was Jesus' chance. The setting was ideal — as society would see it. Jesus had made it in this world. He was famous. As the Pharisees said, ". . . the whole world has gone after him" (John 12:19b NIV).

Instead of accepting the world's crown, Jesus works his way down. Contrary to our philosophy of success as *upward mobility*, Jesus shows us that real and total freedom — true success — can come only through *downward mobility*.

Instead of becoming a worldly king, he challenges the whole religious and political establishment. He shows a divine-life quality which leads to a humiliating death.

This Palm Sunday, let's put our focus to this mystery: "Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness . . . he humbled himself and became obedient to death — even death on a cross! Therefore God exalted him . . . that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow . . . every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. . ." (Philippians 2:6-11 NIV).

This downward road is not the road to hell. It is the road to heaven. *Bernie Wiebe*

What about WCC and NCC?

Recently *Reader's Digest* (August 1982, January 1983) and the TV program "60 Minutes" reported critically on the work of the World Council of Churches and the National Council of Churches. Allegedly the WCC/NCC have been too supportive of Marxist-Leninist movements in the world and have been too negative about U.S. society.

Neither criticism surprised me. Evangelical and other conservative churches (including the GCs) have refused involvement with WCC/NCC. Only churches who generally take high risks in their spiritual endeavors are members of WCC and NCC. Of course they take what the rest of us consider some *bad* risks. They would not be true to themselves if they didn't.

I am surprised at the defensiveness of the WCC and the NCC. Both have provided us with documents pointing out errors in the articles and on television.

Why fight the consequences of risks? They know the rules of popular media and high-risk society. If you enter that arena, you must expect headline-grabbing, reader/viewership-intriguing kind of treatment.

This is an excellent opportunity for the NCC/WCC to tell us *exactly* what they are doing. In the spirit of risk-taking they must let us judge that against the few projects criticized.

I can only speculate that with today's tight money their leaders are panicking that the criticism will cost them some support. It probably will. But my Christian counsel to them still is to tell the truth and let God's Spirit guide their constituency. He will not let them down where they are serving appropriately.

Why mention this in *The Mennonite*? After all, GCs are not members.

Our constituency is so diverse that maybe we'll never join either the NCC/WCC or the National/World Association of Evangelicals. In the past we have agreed not to join either.

Any analysis of the national and global evangelical bodies reveals they are also imperfect. Some problems with them are their alleged being too pro-anything that is U.S. and too negative anything not Western.

Maybe our Anabaptist theology — which is at points uniquely different from mainline Protestantism and evangelical Protestantism — serves best by observing both groups, participating locally or regionally where such smaller groups feel comfortable to do so and retaining the right to be a spiritual challenge to both.

I'm not sure about this position (you wouldn't have guessed, eh?). In our crazy, mixed-up world we need more people who commit themselves to the global cause of Christ's kingdom. Mennonites do excellent global work in both missions and services (development and relief). This is recognized by both WCC and WAE bodies. Perhaps that is the better way.

I invite you — our readers — to share your insights and beliefs on this question. Instead of only, "What about WCC and NCC?" also speak to, "What about WAE and NAE?" *Bernie Wiebe*

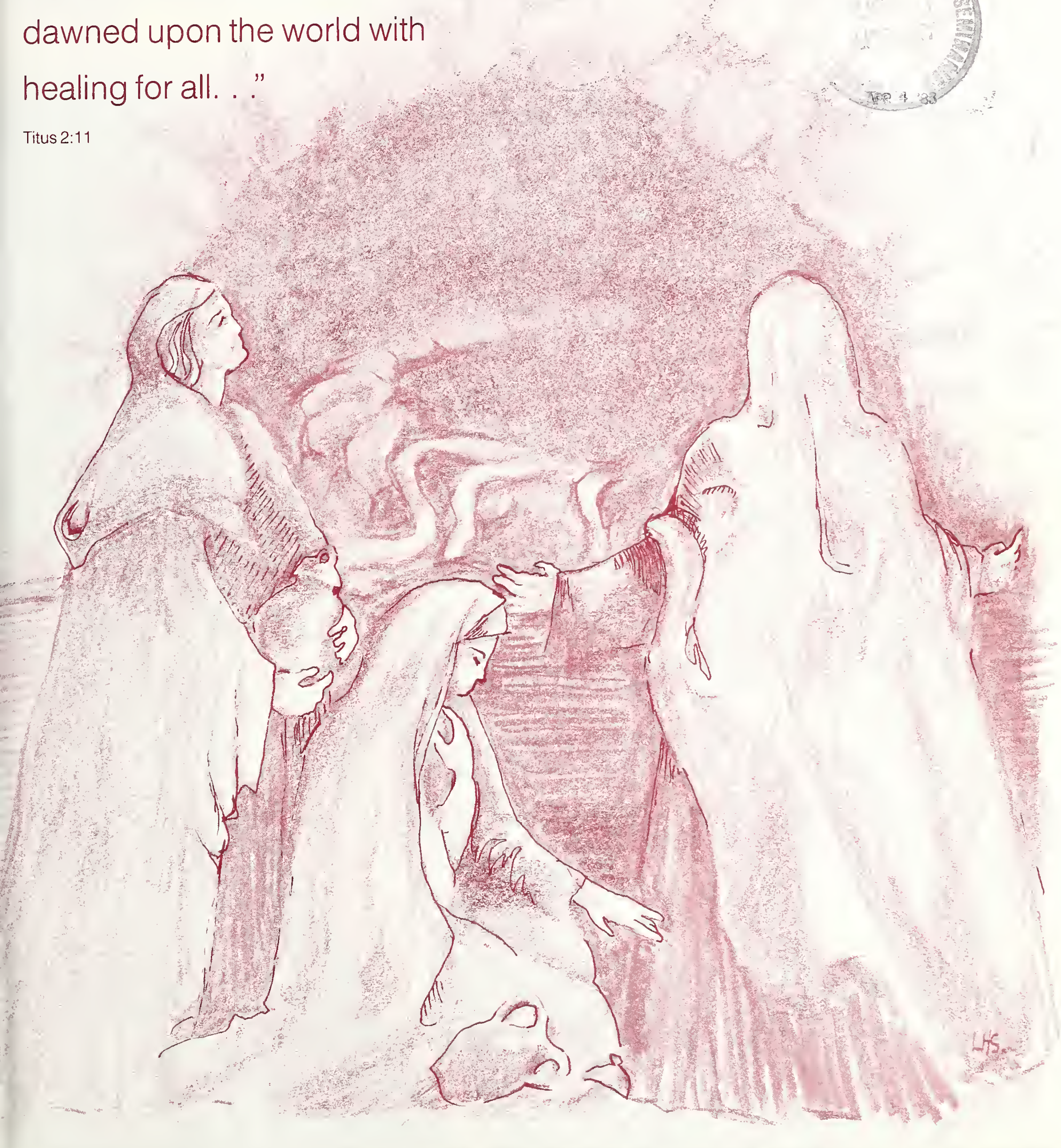
THE MENNONITE

OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST 98:07 MARCH 29, 1983

APR 4 '83

"The grace of God has
dawned upon the world with
healing for all. . ."

Titus 2:11



Hope wants to

> *"Only if we*
> *look long*
> *and deeply into*
> *the abyss of despair*
> *do we dare*
> *to speak*
> *of hope."*

A prayer

Lord, our God, we thank thee that thou hast given us a wonderful future as a foundation on which we can live, in which we can forget our present affliction and can believe that today goodness can already touch us, opposing death and opposing sin and opposing everything evil. Grant that we may become lighthearted and remain strong in patient waiting for the great help which is to come. And let today's history help toward the solution of all problems. We praise thy name, our Father in the heavens. We praise thee, for thou art already good to us today and wilt yet bring clarity to everything on earth to the glory of thy name. Amen.

Reprinted by permission from Christoph Blumhardt, Evening Prayer, Bad Böll, Germany, sometime prior to 1919 (translated into English by the Hutterian Society of Brothers, copyrighted 1971 by Plough Publishing House, Rifton, NY 12471)

cleanse our spirits

Elaine Sommers Rich

If the kitchen range gets covered with grease, we householders apply a strong cleanser and get rid of the dirt. If the insides of our heads become grimy with discouragement, despair and cynicism, we can apply a strong Christian cleanser — *hope.*

Hope is a "firm expectation of good things." To hope is "to look forward to with confidence of fulfillment." "Here and now, dear friends, we are God's children; what we shall be has not yet been disclosed, but we know that when it is disclosed, we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is. Everyone who has this hope before him purifies himself, as Christ is pure" (1 John 3:2 and 3).

Many people are without hope. They cannot bear to consider the future. They believe nuclear war is inevitable. They exist in a constant mood of pessimism. They worry about the air they breathe and the food they eat. They fear to walk on a street alone at night because they are convinced that evil will eventually overwhelm them.

Hopeless people as a last resort often take severe problems to devoted Christian workers, whether pastor or lay compassionate listener. Therefore even Christians can succumb to hopelessness if they focus on incurable diseases, severe marital breakups, lack of money, power struggles and sins of all kinds, more than they focus on the Lord Jesus.

People of hope. Christians must keep aware in every situation of the power of the resurrection within them and without. My cousin Martha says that sometimes after watching the evening news on television she feels she has witnessed a satanic performance. But she also studies the Bible, meets with fellow Christians, prays, works and focuses on Christ. Therefore she is a woman of hope.

My friend Eleanor, a highly skilled telephone counselor, says that when she reaches for that ringing phone, she prays, "Lord, there's nothing you and I together can't handle." She relies on the strength of the Lord. Therefore she is a woman of hope.

"It's Friday; Sunday's a'comin'!" Christians can face the future with hope because God raised Christ Jesus from the dead. Death and evil may prevail temporarily, but they do not have the final word. On the third day — new life and goodness triumph in the end. "The grace of God has dawned upon the world with healing for all mankind; and by it we are disciplined to renounce godless ways and worldly desires, and to live a life of temperance, honesty and godliness in the present age, looking forward to the happy fulfillment of our hope when the splendor of our great God and Savior Christ Jesus will appear. He it is who sacrificed himself for us, to set us free from all wickedness and to make us a pure people marked out for his own, eager to do good" (Titus 2:11-14).

New Testament passages on hope often link it to active doing. Doing good is part of having hope; doing good is often a pathway to hope. Paul wrote to the Thessalonians, "And may our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father, who has shown us such love, and in his grace has given us such unfailing encouragement and such bright hopes, still encourage and fortify you in every good deed and word!" (2 Thessalonians 2:16, 17). A young woman in graduate school at a secular university kept on her dresser where she could read it each morning a card with words from 1 Peter 3:15 written on it: "Be always ready to give an answer whenever you are called to account for *the hope that is in you*, but do it with modesty and respect."

Not a shallow optimism. Is hope a naive belief that everything is OK? Not at all. When Quaker writer Thomas Kelley returned from a religious visit to Friends suffering in Hitler's Germany in the 1930s he wrote, "In such a world as ours today, no light glib word of hope dare be spoken. Some of us hesitate to write to our friends in Europe, lest our words ring hollow in the ears of those who have heard deeper notes of suffering than you or I have ever known. . . . Only the most searching integrity, only the willingness to go to the absolute bottom of life's vase, gives us the right to talk of hope. Only if we look long and deeply into the abyss of despair do we dare to speak of hope. Only as we know a deeper ground of uncertainty that can stand every privation and atrocity of which we have read, can stand them as committed upon ourselves and upon our families, and can still rise radiant and triumphant, dare we speak a word of hope. We dare not tell men to hope in God or in Christ unless we know what it means to have absolutely no other hope but in him. But as we know something of such a profound and amazing assurance, clear at the depths of our beings, then we dare to proclaim it boldly in the midst of a world aflame. But the words are no good if the life experience is not behind them" (Kelley, *The Eternal Promise*, p. 39).

Hope is happening among us. We hope for what has not yet happened but will happen in the future. Millions of people around the world pray daily, "Thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." People who hope know that this prayer is being answered. "If we hope for something we do not yet see, then, in waiting for it, we show our endurance" (Romans 8:25).

Thomas H. Groome says, "The Gospels are Good News for our time and for all time. They are the joyful news that death has been conquered and that we may have life; that the kingdom has already come and is sure to come in all its fullness.

"Because of this, in the midst of our looking back and looking forward, we can choose life in our present; we can live it fully and with joy" (Groome, *Christian Religious Education*, p. 273).

He is risen! Let us get up every morning with *hope* in our hearts. Let us give *hope* to people around us in order that grimy, greasy insides-of-heads may become pure and shining, as they are meant to be. •

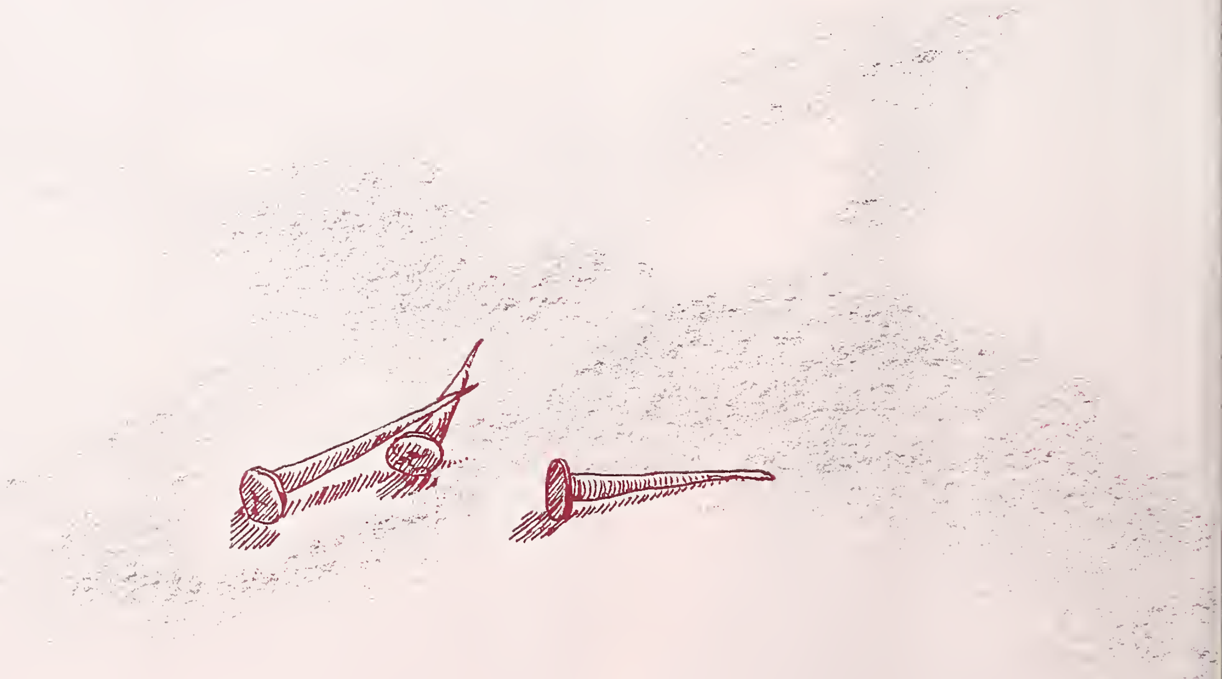
Is it enough?

Fern Pankratz Ruth

My Jesus,
When they had you hung,
And when you looked and saw
The curious gathered, staring;
Could you see beyond that time
To this?

Could you have heard
The Easter morn cacophony
We offer to the Spring-rise sky,
Massed choruses of Handel, Bach,
Atonal chants, camp meeting beat,
The blowing organ's pompous pipes,
The clapping hands, the caterwauling
Screeching mezzos, wailing tenors,
Bass profundities, trumpets' blare

Of sounding brass;
Could you have heard?
Would you have said, "It is enough.
They will not understand.
Please cut me down"?



I gazed upon Old Jerusalem, today a holy city for Moslems, Christians and Jews alike.

I felt his living presence

Elfrieda Tiessen

"I walked today where Jesus walked. . . ." The words of this song keep echoing in my mind. Today it seems almost like a dream, yet a few months ago I did indeed walk where Jesus walked.

Standing at the top of the Mount of Olives, I gazed upon Old Jerusalem, the holy city of Moslems, Christians and Jews alike. As I viewed the panorama before me, the past seemed to blend in with the present: Mount Moriah just beyond the wall below with its gleaming Dome of the Rock — the place where Abraham was prepared to sacrifice his son Isaac (Genesis 22:2). The Garden of Gethsemane below to the far right. In the distance to the left I saw Mount Zion, the traditional site of the Room of the Last Supper. Beside us on the street were the present-day camels with their attendants waiting for willing tourists to pay a few shekels to have their pictures taken with Jerusalem in the background.

All the land below and around us . . . the land where Jesus walked during his last days. Here Jesus fulfilled his task to give his life as a ransom for all who believe. "We are going up to Jerusalem," he said (Mark 10:33). On Palm Sunday he rode down the Mount of Olives into Jerusalem as the crowds "who went before and those who followed cried out, 'Hosanna! Blessed be he who comes in the name of the Lord' " (Mark 11:9).

The different sites stirred childhood memories of learning the Bible stories which have remained with me. They came to life during these days of our spiritual pilgrimage to the Holy Land.

Entering the Old City of Jerusalem thrusts one into a different world. The streets are narrow and old. Soon we came to the place where Jesus sent his disciples ahead to find a room where they might have their Passover meal. Jesus said, "He will show you a large upper room, furnished and ready; there prepare for us" (Mark 14:15). We climbed a flight of stairs, entered a large bare room and stood in silence — pondering the words, "And as they were eating, he took bread, and blessed, and broke it, and gave it to them, and said, 'Take; this is my body.' And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, and they all drank of it. . . . "This is my blood. . .' " (Mark 14:22-24). It seemed Jesus was there as we stood silently in thought. "(He) rose

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And he lives forever with his saints to reign; Hallelujah! Christ arose!

As we passed Station IV — said to be where Jesus comforted Mary — I was startled when a merchant shouted, "Kodak films, Kodak films."

from supper, laid aside his garments, and girded himself with a towel. Then he poured water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel with which he was girded" (John 13:4, 5). A feeling of awe came over me as we quietly left the room. Surely my feet had been washed by the Master this day.

We crossed the Kidron Valley and came to the Garden of Gethsemane, where Jesus often went for retreat and prayer. Today there are eight olive trees left in the garden. These trees, estimated to be some 3,000 years old, are so gnarled and twisted they seem to reflect Jesus' agony as he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, "My father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt" (Matthew 26:39).

Beside the garden is the Church of All Nations, built in 1919-1924, which replaced the destroyed 12th-century church of the Crusaders. The original Byzantine basilica was built in 379 over the place made holy by the prayer and agony of Jesus. In front of the altar of this church lies a portion of the traditional rock of agony. Someone in the group quietly began to sing, "I come to the Garden alone. . . ." One by one we joined in this and other songs which reminded us of Jesus' time of sorrow and torment. The dim light of the late afternoon shimmering through the purple windows created an aura for our silent meditation and prayer.

Now we came to the empty (garden) tomb. Not all Christians agree upon this as the place of Jesus' burial. But it did seem to us in keeping with the biblical account.

Jesus was seized in Gethsemane and handed over to Pilate after being condemned by the Sanhedrin at the house of Caiphas. The judgment is said to have taken place within the walls of Antonio Fortress. We stood on the pavement which was the place of Jesus' trial (John 19:13). The Via Dolorosa (Way of Sorrows) is the traditional pathway Jesus followed as he carried his cross after he was condemned. We slowly made our way past the 14 stations said to commemorate the events leading to Calvary. I was filled with mixed emotions. The narrow street was filled with tourists as well as merchants selling their wares. As we passed Station IV — said to be where Jesus comforted Mary — I was startled when a merchant shouted, "Kodak films, Kodak films." We walked on. I envisaged Christ falling a second time as we stopped in front of Station VII. The loud laughter of a passing tourist at first felt offensive. But it also bridged the present to my reflections of the past. His loud laughter reminded me of the soldiers mocking Jesus as they followed him (Mark 15:20). Just before we reached Station X — where it is said Jesus was stripped of his garments — I was struck by the incongruity of racks and racks filled with colorful shirts and dresses for sale.

We continued our journey on to Golgotha — The Place of the Skull (Matthew 27:33). Our guide's voice faded into the background as I remembered the words of Jesus, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me" (Matthew 27:46). When he received the drink, Jesus said, "It is finished" (John 19:30).

Now we came to the empty tomb. The group stood in silence as we looked upon the place where Joseph laid the body of Jesus (Matthew 27:60); then we sang "Up from the grave he arose."

I walked into the garden and stood on the path with olives, date palms and pomegranates growing on either side. The sunlight filtered through the trees shining brightly on a single red rose. I leaned over to breathe in its fragrance. All the while these words echoed in my mind: *And he lives forever with his saints to reign; Hallelujah! Christ arose!* •

Is wealth proof of God's blessing?

Calvin Redekop

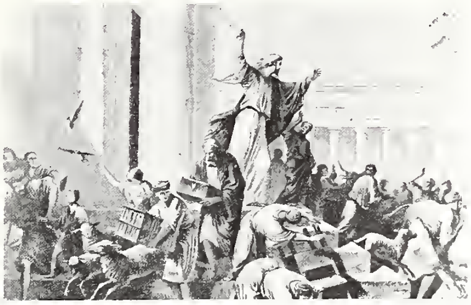
To be rich is the fondest dream of many people today. In fact many people have become rich by selling books and schemes which promise to make others rich. The American way is to be a millionaire by the time you are 30 years old. Are you close?

Rich is a relative term, and in comparison with the majority of human beings throughout history we are all fabulously rich. The "problem" of being rich is addressed in the New Testament, and according to Jesus we know what we must do with our riches — give them away (see Feb. 15 issue, "Carving up the Estate").

There still remains, however, a hazy and pervasive belief that God makes us rich. The sacred writings, the Christian oral tradition and the knee-jerk reaction in our heads tell us that God blesses us materially when we are faithful. In the article "A Blessing or a Test" L. A. King writes, "Last Christmas my wife and I received from Christian friends one of those mimeographed newsletters that come during the holidays. At the end was a scribbled note: 'God has certainly blessed us this past year!' The basis of that statement was a catalog — 'good health all around of course, plus a son's big promotion which almost doubled his salary, another's setting up a branch of his business . . . and the husband's having a banner year in his business, in spite of the recession' " (*Gospel Herald*, Sept. 24, 1982).

But we shouldn't be too hard on Christians, who from overflowing hearts and bank accounts want to give God the credit (no pun, please). After all, when things go good, everyone is happy to share the cheer.

But beyond emotional exuberance, there are biblical reasons why Christians thank God when they become rich. In the article "Riches and Poverty in the Book of Proverbs" Gordon A. Chutter suggests, "According to . . . Proverbs the righteous man will find himself becoming wealthy." He cites only a few references: "He who pursues righteousness and love finds life, prosperity and honor" (21:21); "The faithful man will be richly blessed" (28:20); "He who trusts in the Lord will prosper" (25:25). Chutter concludes that "in short, wealth is a crown of the wisely lived life" according to Proverbs (*Crux*, June 1982, p. 24).



An unidentified artist painted "Jesus driving the money changers from the temple." What does this say to us today?

The Old Testament has many chapters regarding faithfulness and the blessings of riches. ". . . if ye hearken to these judgements, and keep, and do them . . . he will love thee, and bless thee, and . . . increase thy kine, and thy flocks and thy sheep. . ." (Deuteronomy 7:12-13). The New Testament also refers to faith and God's blessings, but there is a considerable difference about the connection between them. Paul says in 1 Timothy 6:9, "But those who want to get rich fall into temptation and are caught in the trap of many foolish and harmful desires. . . ." In this passage it seems riches don't come by God's blessings but are the result of desire and the consequences are not very healthy.

Some Christians have eschewed riches. John Wesley was not able to accept a positive connection between faithfulness and blessings. Riches come, he said, not as a direct blessing from God, but as the result of honesty, frugality, hard work and integrity, which are good Christian fruits.

But many contemporary Christians persist in believing that God blesses them materially for faithfulness. But what of those millions not as blessed as we are? Are they less faithful? And what about those of us who undergo misfortune and lose our riches? Did God take it from us because of unfaithfulness? Obviously a return to faithfulness should restore our riches.

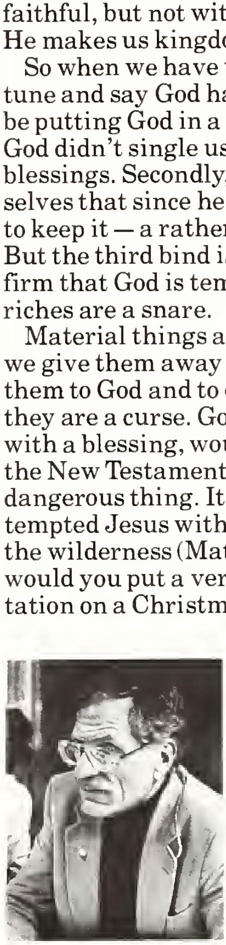
I believe the New Testament does not provide a shred of a connection between faithfulness and riches.

So what can you tell your friends on the Christmas greeting about last year's "financial and material blessings"? Didn't God have a hand in it? I think not. But isn't all of the earth's goodness a result of God's blessing? Of course. Then what is the connection between faithfulness and blessing? There is none. The fact that most in the United States and Canada have been "blessed" with all material goodies while millions are starving does not say that God loves us more.

In Matthew 5:45 Jesus says that you must love your enemies "so that you may become the sons of your Father in heaven. For he makes his sun to shine on bad and good people alike, and gives rain to those who do good and to those who do evil." God is as good to the evil as to the righteous. God does bless the faithful, but not with material things. He makes us kingdom citizens.

So when we have unusually good fortune and say God has blessed, we may be putting God in a triple bind. First, God didn't single us out for material blessings. Secondly, we are telling ourselves that since he gave it, we deserve to keep it — a rather clever ploy, right? But the third bind is that we thereby affirm that God is tempting us. Paul says riches are a snare.

Material things are a blessing only if we give them away — let go, dedicate them to God and to others — otherwise they are a curse. God would not curse us with a blessing, would he? My reading of the New Testament tells me riches are a dangerous thing. It was the devil who tempted Jesus with riches unlimited in the wilderness (Matthew 4:9). How would you put a version of *that* interpretation on a Christmas card?



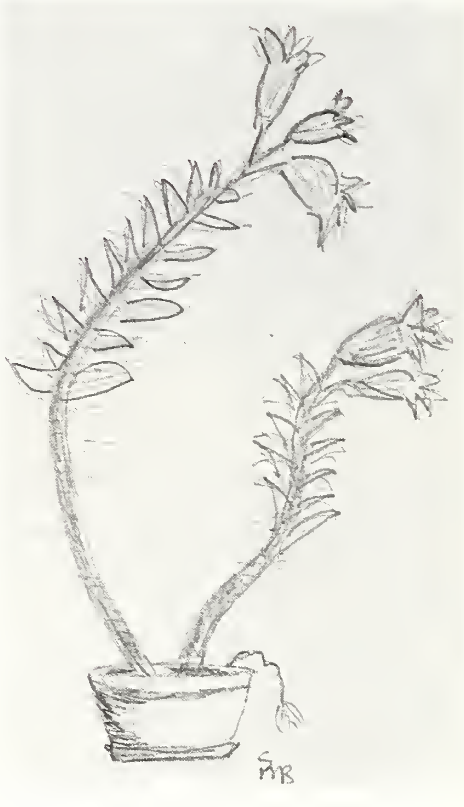
Calvin Redekop is professor of sociology at Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, ON N2L 3G6.

A parable from my lily

Marlene Bagnull

My children had given me an Easter lily. It had bloomed beautifully, slowly withered and finally died. I planted the bulb outside, expecting it would remain dormant until the following spring when I hoped it would again grow and bloom. To my astonishment, when I was bedding down my garden for winter, I saw that the lily had started to grow. It was over a foot tall and looked as if it would bloom again that year. I dug it up, potted it and brought it indoors.

For months I watched that plant grow — two feet, three feet, four feet tall. It kept growing, sending out even another shoot. There were no signs of flower buds, however, and I began to wonder when and if it would ever bloom. I decided I would be patient a little longer. In the warm sunny window of our dining room I did all I could to encourage it to produce flowers, faithfully watering and tending it daily. But after six months my patience wore thin. I questioned the worth of letting that plant, which had become ungainly looking, take up space in my window. Just when I was ready to get rid of it, to my surprise and delight I saw three buds on the main plant and two on the shoot.



The parable. That lily's story showed me the deeper truths that the Lord had been seeking to teach me. I had begun to bloom as a Christian a number of years ago. My life had produced some beautiful flowers that had held the promise of a fruitful Christian life and ministry. But then it was as if I went into a period of dormancy — a time of replenishing resources drained through often serving the Lord in my own strength. During this time I had questioned my worth and wondered if the Lord had a plan and purpose for me.

Then unexpectedly a door of Christian service opened to me. I began to grow again, nurtured by a supportive husband, family, friends and pastor. I had great plans to accomplish for the Lord and worked hard. But no lasting fruit seemed to be borne by all my efforts.

Perhaps the Lord has been preparing me for another ministry, I reasoned. I began to withdraw from service in my local church and started to move in a new direction of Christian outreach. Again, however, when the fruit did not begin to appear, I became discouraged and ready to quit.

A plant that doesn't produce flowers or fruit is useless, I reasoned; and that was the way I was beginning to feel about myself. Of what use was the growth that was occurring in my life, if the fruit of an effective ministry to others was not being realized? I was tired of relearning lessons I thought I had mastered years ago. God's pruning of my pride, my motives, my self-will, was difficult and painful to accept. Even more discouraging was my knowledge that, for all of God's pruning, my life was still not bearing fruit.

Buds of hope. And then, in the buds of my lily plant, I felt God gently reassuring me that my life too would bear fruit if I would simply learn to stay close to him and trust his timing and working in my life. It was his responsibility to bring about those fruits I longed to see.

My responsibility was to abide in him — to allow him to prune me of the things which would stand in the way of a fruitful life. I needed to become open to the things he wanted to teach me and that I needed to learn — things like patience, persistence, trust, willingness to change and the surrender of my will to his. I needed to become further grounded in his Word. He needed to help build a foundation that would be strong enough to keep me firmly rooted in order that the fruit of my ministry might reach full maturity.

I felt the Lord lovingly admonishing me for my impatience and misplaced priorities. In my anxiety to see some fruit I had gotten my eyes off the Lord. I had forgotten that more important than the things I could do for him was my relationship with him. I had been in danger of again burning myself out in service to the Lord — in sweating and straining to produce fruits that only he could bring about.

There is no sidestepping that period of growth and pruning. The master gardener must have his way.

Now I am learning to be content — to abide and grow in him. In delightful and surprising ways my life is finally beginning to bear fruit — fruit that I don't have to struggle and labor to produce, but fruit which is naturally growing out of my being with him. And the lessons he is teaching me in the process, through the relationship he is nurturing between us, are becoming more precious than the choicest of fruits or the most beautiful of lilies.

Maintenance coordinator

Elim Bible Institute is seeking a maintenance coordinator on a voluntary service basis initially. Duties include coordination of all janitorial work in the school; maintaining and repairing, if necessary, all campus buildings and equipment, ordering cleaning and maintenance supplies, etc. Candidates should have skill in carpentry and repair work, abilities to relate well to people in a small setting and an appreciation for the purpose of a Bible school. Position to commence in September 1983, though must be determined by April 1983.

Address resume and references to:
Dan Zehr, principal
Elim Bible Institute
Box 120
Altona, MB R0G 0B0.

Alligators can't swallow

Cynthia Goerzen

"Read alligator, read," our son John begged. He had received a new book for his second birthday. For some reason the owl and the alligator had become his favorites. John opened the book and begged me to read the page about the owl, then the alligator, the owl again, and the alligator once more. I had a strong dislike for alligators and did not particularly relish our son's interest in the clumsy-looking creatures. My mind wandered back through the years to a terrifying experience with a live, hungry-looking alligator.

I was four years old then, the youngest of four children. My family traveled the long, tiresome miles by car from Kansas to Bluffton, Ohio, for the triennial General Conference. The excitement with which we left home slowly faded away, and the impatient conversation was frequently interspersed with, "How many more miles?" and, "I need a drink." Arriving in Bluffton revived us, and we nearly bubbled out of the crowded car.

Like other General Conference meetings, the agenda was filled with pressing issues for discussion. Questions were asked. Ideas presented. Concerns laid before the Lord. Some answers were found; some were not then discerned. Lifelong friendships developed.

Most people knew me as a shy little girl. I could talk a mile a minute at home but found it difficult to say even a few words anywhere else. I hated the nursery at the conference. The moment I walked through the nursery door I knew it was not the place for me. I didn't know anyone and was too timid to make any new friends. I felt terribly alone. Amid a roomful of playing childlren I sat by myself and cried until Mom rescued me.

Not wanting to put me through another such experience, Mom and Dad took me with them to the next session. I had no earth-shaking resolution to present to an attentive audience, but I had a preconceived idea of what should constitute an interesting meeting. I listened for a while, playing quietly with a few small toys. I was proud of my father when he stood up to relate an opinion. I knew the meeting was about religious matters, and I knew my parents were deeply committed to the Lord. I hoped everyone would heed my father's counsel. But as the discerning of God's will slowly progressed, my interest lagged and my behavior became increasingly unacceptable. Finally it was termed "disruptive and intolerable," and Dad carried me out behind the building to spank me.

That evening my family gathered for its own five-delegate conference meeting. Only one item was on the agenda: What would they do with me? Two options had already failed. What now? After some deliberation, it was resolved one of my brothers and my sister would become responsible for me. They did not seem to mind. James was 12, Vernell 9.

James was first. I didn't want to cause trouble another time so I took my coloring books and crayons. James and I met his new friend at the agreed-upon tree stump, and our time together passed quickly without a hitch.

The session with my sister was a different story. Vernell's new friend resented a little sister tagging along, and from the moment she met me she was determined to make me regret coming with them. Surprised by that reaction, Vernell blossomed into a peacemaker and the emotions subsided, although they would flare occasionally. On an unguided exploratory tour the three of us were suddenly face-to-face with a live, caged alligator. I had never seen such an awesome looking creature before and shrank back as far away from it as I could. As a last desperate attempt to rid herself of me, my sister's friend seized the opportunity and blurted, "I'm going to throw you to that alligator." She shouted so convincingly that I believed her. Having opened its mouth as the girl spoke, the alligator hungrily snapped it shut. Thoroughly frightened, I threw myself at my sister, nearly knocking her over, and clung to her for dear life. Not wanting to further anger the other girl or alienate me, my sister groped for an immediate response. Since neither of us had any inside knowledge of an alligator's anatomy, Vernell's quick, authoritative rebuttal was sufficient to calm my fear: "Don't worry. Alligators can't swallow; they don't have throats."

Now I can laugh with my son as he points to the sleeping alligator in his book and declares, "Big mouth." "Yes, it is," I readily agree. And sometimes I add, "it looks even bigger when it is open." *A triennial conference story for children and parents*

Assistant director needed

Assistant director required for **YOU (Youth Orientation Units)** — MCC Alberta project. YOU is a residential farmwork program designed to meet the needs of young adult offenders, ages 16-20.

Farm is located 80 km. southwest of Edmonton. Successful candidate will report to director of program. Will assist in duties: supervise up to six volunteer staff, training of staff, cost control, communications with regulatory agencies and administration of adequate and fair discipline practices for up to 12 residents in the program.

Experience in supervision and in the trades is required. Must have ability to relate to delinquent youth. Appropriate degree would be an asset but not essential.

Apply in writing to:
George Friesen
257 Rhatigan Road West
Edmonton, AB T6R 1B2
Phone 403/438-6110.

Council of Commissions produces no burning issues

Zero-growth budget keeps a tight lid on General C

Newton, Kan. — The General Conference's Division of Administration might have closed the books on fiscal 1982, but the realities of last year's receipts and budget shortfall spilled over the calendar pages into fiscal 1983 to keep a tight lid on denominational expenditures and program for the coming year.

Knowing that only 92.7 percent of last year's $5,064,530 budget had come in, the nearly 200 board and commission staff and representatives came to the March 3-8 meetings expecting to tighten some belts. Early during the course of the weekend, however, the DA made it official: It would recommend to the General Board, the three commissions and the seminary that the 1983 income budget be identical to 1982, thereby calling for a 7.9 percent increase in giving over last year. The measure was later adopted by GB, along with a recommendation that the percentage each commission would receive of the total income be computed the same for '83 as it had been for '82.

With the annual battle for the budget over almost before it began, commissioners were left with little else to get in the way of careful scrutiny of their programs. Council of Commissions 1983 was characterized primarily by its predictability: few surprises, no major contentious issues, a business-as-usual mood. The slogan "stay the course" might have been coined by the conference's administrators and commission members to describe the outlook for the coming year.

General Board

In fact, the absense of maneuverings by commissions to get bigger percentages of prorated income might become the wave of the future. During its first session the GB moved that "in its fall 1983 meeting, the GB will establish the percentages to be used in prorating general contributions for the 1983-86 triennium. . . . Only in the event of a radical change in the situation facing a given commission, the seminary or the conference would the percentages be changed during the triennium."

Although the income budget for this year will remain unchanged from last, GB did approve higher expenditure budgets for the Commission on Home Ministries, the Commission on Overseas Mission and Mennonite Biblical Seminary. The extra funds will come from cash reserves.

CHM member Ivorie Lowe reads a statement from Community Church, Markham, Ill., explaining its refugee sanctuary decision.

On the ongoing issue of tax withholding, GB agreed to submit a resolution to delegates at Bethlehem '83 to "authorize the officers [of the conference] to test the constitutionality of [the tax withholding] requirement . . . by refusing to serve as tax collectors in cases where individual employees have asked that their federal income taxes not be withheld from their wages, in order that they may conscientiously refuse to pay for war."

In other business, GB tabled a proposal on the creation of a new theological reference committee to deal with various issues within the conference, heard a progress report on the human sexuality study (the first part of which will be ready for Bethlehem '83) and recommended 22 new churches for membership in the General Conference, to be received at this summer's triennial sessions. A statement on inter-Mennonite cooperation was approved and forwarded to the Mennonite Church's General Board for discussion next month. If it passes there, it will be presented to delegates at Bethlehem for ratification.

Commission on Education

In the Commission on Education the major decisions revolved around the selection of a new executive secretary, structural changes, a new hymnal, future Bible study publications and a possible Christian education program at the seminaries in Elkhart, Ind.

John W. Sprunger of Swift Current, Sask., was chosen as COE's new chief executive, replacing John Gaeddert. Sprunger will begin his new duties sometime during the last half of this year (see "Profile," p. 163).

Sprunger

A new structure was approved with goals to increase biblical understanding, strengthen families, strengthen church community and develop more effective disciples. COE reorganized into two main divisions — publishing and education — which will replace the present departments this fall. "We hope the structure will last beyond the '80s," said chairperson Alice Suderman.

A somewhat autonomous Mennonite Education Council will relate to U.S. schools and colleges. The Canadian Congregational Resources Board is processing how it will relate to educational institutions. "By August our proposals will have been reviewed," said CRB staff person Eleanor Loewen. "I feel good about the way things have been worked out with the COE staff."

The commission approved the exploration of a proposal on a new hymnal. Maynard Shelly's Bible survey course will be available by 1984, while faculty members at Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg, are considering writing eight Bible book studies.

COE also recommended the establishment of a task force to study the need for a Christian education "track" at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries. It is to hold its first meeting prior to Bethlehem '83.

ference programming

Commission on Home Ministries

The main focus of CHM was, What are the priorities of home missions in the coming triennium? Commission members and staff divided into groups during one session to discuss the question. What emerged was the goal of providing everyone in the United States and Canada with the option of attending an Anabaptist congregation.

Commission member Leonard Wiebe pointed out that the goal established at the 1977 General Conference in Bluffton, Ohio, of planting 50 new churches in 10 years had already been exceeded. Thus far, 53 new congregations have been started since then. "What may seem unrealistic needn't be," added David Habegger, who began working this past year as secretary for congregational life. Others noted how the other ministries in CHM's program could fit into this goal.

General Board gave approval to a 500-person donor plan, to be administered by Church Extension Services, for the purpose of aiding new churches in purchasing meeting places or multiministry buildings. According to the plan, 500 individuals would be enlisted to contribute $100 each up to twice a year. The funds raised are to be above budget.

In a joint recommendation with the Commission on Education, CHM called for the establishment of a fund to aid General Conference non-registrant students whose federal tuition aid was to be denied by the government. Although the measure was approved by the General Board, a federal judge in Minnesota barred the government from enforcing such a law, at least temporarily, on March 10. Saying that the law was "likely" to violate constitutional rights against self-incrimination, U.S. District Judge Donald Alsop issued a preliminary injunction in a lawsuit that draft resisters and educators had brought as a national test case.

Perhaps the most heated discussion in CHM during the meetings occurred chiefly among staff on the subject of salary increases. Although the DA was recommending no salary increases for General Conference staff for '83, and despite the December CHM staff decision to forego any salary increases for the sake of programs, there was not unanimity about the decision. The discussion became moot later when the GB voted to allow no staff salary increases, but commission members asked that the CHM staff work further on the question among themselves.

Two items of concern from the peace and justice report were the dropping of farm issues from the budget and the meager response from congregations about the *Justice and the Christian Witness* study packets. In other actions, CHM agreed to increase Barth Hague's work load from three quarters to full time and passed a resolution supporting congregations offering sanctuary to refugees.

Commission on Overseas Mission

With 11 terminations and 26 new appointments overseas in 1982, COM members were told there are now 155 active workers in the field. Referring to the 1980 Estes Park conference goal — 175 missionaries by 1985 — COM staff expressed optimism that it could be reached. Fifteen new candidates were approved at Council of Commissions.

Having joined the other commissions in falling below its budget askings for 1982, the commission wondered out loud how it would meet budget requirements for the expanding missionary team. In sessions with the DA, COM was encouraged to overspend the 1983 askings and to continue recruiting workers. It was felt that monies would come in if people realized the new potentials.

Growth continues in overseas churches. Zaire now has more Mennonites than any other country, with the exceptions of Canada and the United States. A new Bible teaching ministry with the African Independent Churches in Transkei was begun in 1982. Bible translation workers have been placed in Upper Volta to translate the Scriptures into the Senufo language.

An exciting development in 1982 was the Japan Mennonite Church's paying of most of its own field budget. It expects to do the same in 1983. The Fellowship of Mennonite Churches in Taiwan is aiming for similar self-support by 1986.

After numerous requests from South Korea and a diligent search for personnel, Asia secretary Peter Kehler announced that Burton and Elnore Yost of Bluffton, Ohio, will become COM's first workers in Korea sometime in 1983. Their assignment will be for six months.

India, which has had serious internal difficulties before, found its annual conference sessions challenged in court for having conducted its affairs contrary to its constitution. A March 1 report from that country indicated that the hearings to date have upheld the conference actions, but more hearings are pending.

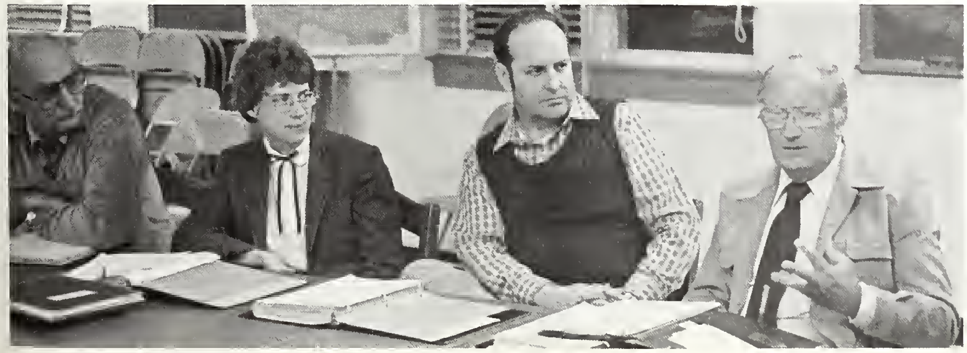
Lubin Jantzen, still fresh from India retirement, presented a proposal for self-supporting "tentmaker" missionaries as a way to augment COM staff in the future. The proposal was approved for further study.

Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson, Neb., came to COM with a request to modify policy so that missionaries with skills not now needed in COM fields could still work under the commission but be secunded to other agencies. The proposal was accepted, again for study and possible implementation.

Looking to improve communications

(continued on following page)

Jake Tilitzky (right) reports to GB on his recent visit to South American churches. Listening in are (left to right) Paul Dyck, Anna Juhnke and Marvin Zehr.



Ethan Joel Houser, born Jan. 31, is the newest addition to the family of *The Mennonite*'s editorial assistant. Shown at right is Ethan with his mom and dad and editor Bernie Wiebe (left).

Two members-at-large were to be elected to the board of Mennonite Central Committee (Canada) at its annual meeting in January. Vernon Leis, a Kitchener, Ont., pastor and one of four nominees for the two positions, withdrew from the ballot to insure that at least one of the two women nominees would be elected. "I see it as an injustice not to have more women on the board," he said. "It's a justice issue and I feel deeply about this." After a half-hour delay, the board elected Ray Brubacher of Elmira, Ont., and Irene Ewert Wiebe of Saskatoon. The 31-member board now has two women members.

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with the GC constituency and looking somewhat enviously at the *AIMM Messenger* being used to promote mission in Africa, COM passed a resolution to prepare for the possible rejuvenation of its own special publication. A proposal is to be ready no later than next March's annual meeting.

Mennonite Biblical Seminary

Aside from cooperating with COE in studying the feasibility of a new Christian education track at the seminary, the MBS board tackled no major new initiatives at its Council of Commissions meetings. J. Winfield Fretz was affirmed heartily for the positive interim leadership he is providing while MBS president Henry Poettcker completes his sabbatical.

Concerns were raised repeatedly about the acute needs for housing, especially on campus. Rooms for singles, apartments for marrieds and nursery facilities for children are all in short supply. Although a residential building program seems the logical step, interest rates are still discouragingly high. The matter was passed on to the joint Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries board for further study.

Other items of discussion included the need for providing new pastors from non-Anabaptist theological backgrounds with continuing theological education opportunities and the large number of faculty members approaching retirement in the next few years. Faculty matters will require a fair amount of attention in 1984.

MBS is continuing to study the matter of its communications more closely. Faculty will receive a 4 percent increase in salary for 1983.

Division of Administration

DA members used a significant amount of their meeting time in dealing with ways to rescue the missionary supplemental retirement fund used to supplement the incomes of former COM and CHM workers. A regular part of those commissions' budgets until 1976, the fund was endowed that year with $250,000 in the hope that this would take care of future needs until the fund was no longer required (because of improved retirement benefits for later personnel). In the end, division members agreed to recommend that the commissions budget for this purpose again beginning with the current fiscal year.

In other business, DA approved the purchase of a word processing system from Datapoint for central offices in Newton. Money to pay for the equipment will come from a sinking fund established several years ago for this purpose. A recommendation on the use of interest from bequest funds was passed on to GB, which tabled discussion on that matter until its fall meeting.

Church Extension Services approved four loans to churches for the purchase of property, construction of buildings and renovations: Champaign-Urbana, Ill., $24,000 for the purchase of property next to the church for future expansion; Hong Kong, $50,000 for the purchase of church property; Burns Lake, B.C., $50,000 for a new building; and Vancouver Chinese Mennonite, $81,500 for a major renovation. The latter two loans are contingent upon the Canadian conference's granting of funds held for similar purposes. CES loans are guaranteed at an interest rate of 8 percent for the initial five years.

Window to Mission *editor Jeannie Zehr discusses rising publication costs.*

Women in Mission

In spite of WM's exceeding the $1 million mark in combined financial and material aid contributions for the second year in a row, Lora Oyer, president, had to inform the 30 WM delegates representing all districts and provinces except British Columbia that in 1982, "for the first time in many years, WM did not make budget." Cash income from the 362 WM groups in the United States and Canada met 96.6 percent of the goal.

Because of escalating publishing costs, Lois Deckert had prepared a feasibility study on the future of WM's publication *Window to Mission*. Postage increases in 1982 already had forced the periodical to go to "bundle" mailings rather than individual addresses. After looking at the options, consensus was that *Window* is a "vitally important link and resource for WM groups" and therefore a $24,000 publication budget was justified for 1983.

A new WM feature for 1983 is a get-acquainted kit for pastors' wives when they enter their first General Conference pastorates. Yet perhaps the most unique feature of the annual WM sessions this year was the opening worship led by Jacquie Cornies. Commemorating World Day of Prayer, Cornies used Psalms 51 and 23 to lead the WM council in creative movement with musical accompaniment as they tried to express the meaning of these two prayer psalms. President Oyer commented at the close of this special worship, "Jacquie has helped us experience a new dimension of praise and worship; I have been deeply moved." *General Conference communications staff*

THE MENNONITE

WM EDITION

WINDOW TO MISSION

APRIL-MAY 1983

THE OPEN WINDOW

The clay sculpture on the shelf included several figures, rich in reds, oranges, and browns of the desert. The central figure was a seated woman, a Native American. On one side of her was a child with a dog, another child alongside carried a drum, and one child was asleep on her shoulder.

In the Southwest, in the area of the Yumas, Mohaves, Walapais, and Cocopas, this is seen in many variations. Sometimes the seated woman is surrounded by several children; sometimes she is overwhelmed, with children crawling all over her and seated rapt at her feet.

She is the storyteller of the tribe. She tells the ancient legends and the history of her people, singing and chanting what has been as a force to shape what will be.

We, too, are clay storytellers — not sculpture, hardened like the art pieces, but soft clay.

Just as the artists add water to make the clay malleable as they shape it, the presence of the Living Water in us keeps us soft clay that is continually being molded.

Some would like the faith better if we could be fixed, set, and predictable. But to be God's storyteller is to be soft clay, continually changing, yielding to the shaping of the Holy Spirit.

The story of God's grace is a story that isn't finished yet — each of us tells the story anew in our own lives.

As we allow the Living Water to flow through us, we remain soft — to respond, to be shaped into God's image. And we not only *tell* God's story; we *are* God's story, right in the middle of things, telling what has been in order to shape what is to be.

— Mary Lou Redding

COVER

We need to see the needs, the hurts, the joys of others and also be willing to share our lives, let them see into our lives. In seeing and knowing we both can grow closer to Christ.

WM

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MODERN MIRACLE

Becky Sohar

GOD'S TIMING is always perfect. We don't know what lies ahead, but God holds the future in his hands, and is in control of all things.

It was the evening of October 7, 1982. It had been a busy week and we were looking forward to a quiet family evening at home.

My husband, Nikki, was relaxing reading the newspaper. Ten-year-old Lisa was busy cleaning her room.

Heather (nine years old) and Benjamin (four years old) had gone outside to feed their dog and cat. I could see the children from the kitchen window as I washed the supper dishes. They were running to the doghouse in the backyard.

It was a warm evening and a light rain was falling. There had been no signs of thunder or lightning, just a gentle, quiet rain.

All of a sudden, I was startled by the loudest crack of thunder I had ever heard. My heart skipped a beat. Vibrations shook the house as if there had been an explosion nearby.

I couldn't see the children from the window, but I heard screams that sent chills straight through me.

I ran outside as fast as I could, thinking how terrified they must be. Nikki ran outside too, and we raced to the garden where we heard Benjamin's hysterical screams.

We stared in disbelief as we saw Heather lying motionless on the ground. We couldn't believe what we saw. It just had to be a dream! Not our child!

But it was real. Heather had been struck dead by a bolt of lightning. Benjamin had been standing right beside her, but he was unhurt. He cried uncontrollably as we examined Heather's body. I could tell immediately that she was dead.

Her eyes were open; her pupils were fixed and dilated. She was not breathing and her heart was not beating. Her T-shirt was split open down the front from the lightning, and there were burns on her chest. She was smoking from where she had been hit on the back of her neck.

When I touched her, her body was hot from the intense heat of the lightning. The smell of burnt flesh and hair was overpowering in the air around me. To see Heather like this was like a scene from a horror movie.

I am a person who panics easily. When I

was younger I gave up my dream of being a nurse when I couldn't handle the sight of blood, people in pain, or death. I tell you this because what happened to *me* that night was the first of God's miracles.

God turned my usual panic into an inner peace and strength. He used my weakness to reveal his mighty power.

Some would say that a person can do anything in a crisis situation, but I want to give all the credit and glory to God for what he enabled me, as well as others, to do that night.

God gave Nikki and me a special direction and wisdom to know exactly what to do. We never once asked frantically, "What should we do?"

Nikki called the ambulance while I did mouth-to-mouth resuscitation. I had never practiced any first aid techniques before in my life. Much later I found out that the emergency techniques I had used were the most effective for her situation.

As I worked I felt empty and helpless, and a brokenness of heart over the loss of my precious daughter. I realized I had no power to change anything that had happened, or to bring her back to life again. It was then that I surrendered myself completely to One who is all powerful.

I had accepted Christ years before, but I had never let him have complete control of my life. At this moment I put my complete trust in him, knowing that whatever happened, I would not be alone. I gave him everything, including my precious daughter, to whom I wanted to cling so desperately.

Nikki and Benjamin were crying and praying beside Heather and me. Lisa was crying in the front yard waiting for the ambulance.

The Kidron rescue squad and five volunteer firemen arrived within three minutes of our call. Heather was still not responding. They applied cardiopulmonary resuscitation.

The firemen contacted the Orrville hospital telling them they were bringing a girl who had no vital signs; she was technically dead.

This was only the beginning of how God chose to use many people, each in his or her own special way, to bring about a miracle before our very eyes!

Ten minutes after she had been struck, Heather was on her way to Dunlap Memorial Hospital which was eight miles away.

Before Nikki and I left home we called our pastor at Salem Mennonite Church to ask him to start our church prayer chain. We left the other children with neighbors.

The news of Heather's condition spread like fire. People all over were praying for us. We could feel the love and support all around us.

At seven o'clock (thirty minutes after Heather had been struck), her heart started beating and she began breathing on her own. She did not regain consciousness, but she was alive!

Heather was still in very serious condition. Her body had gone through more than we will ever know. There was no way of knowing at this point just how much damage had been done to her brain and central nervous system.

After a little over an hour at Dunlap Hospital, the decision was made to transfer Heather to Akron Children's Hospital, thirty miles away.

I rode in the front seat of the ambulance. Nikki drove separately with our pastor. Riding in the ambulance is an experience I'll never forget. The lights and sirens were on full blast all the way. God held me close and comforted me.

I prayed that I could accept whatever happened with Heather. I knew she might die and go to heaven with God. I knew she might live and suffer severe brain damage. And I knew she might live and be completely healed.

I thought back to when Heather was a baby, and then to her growing up. I thought about all the joy she had brought into our lives. God had given us a wonderful gift, but she was not our child, she was his.

The reality of how much God gave up when he let his Son die for our sins became more clear to me.

Continued on page 12

OUR CHURCH FAMILY

1983

Menno Mennonite Church, Ritzville, Washington

Since 1977 the Menno congregation has annually created a church family banner to respond creatively and remember special events and feelings in the church family. The idea was initiated by a former pastor to encourage each family to share a symbol of some significant event throughout the year.

Presently the banner project is the responsibility of a delegated person who designs simple symbols of special happenings, including a title and date. This provides the necessary information for a meaningful understanding of the symbols which are put on at the time of or shortly after the event.

The most recent banner features symbols of births, infant dedications, deaths, weddings, special studies, special speakers, musical presentations, holiday services, retreats, new members, social events, graduates, and a get-well card listing specific names of persons who have been ill.

Maplewood Mennonite Church, Fort Wayne, Indiana

As the new year comes in, a new banner always appears in the Maplewood church sanctuary. At the start of the year, all it says is "Our Church Family" and the current year. During the "sharing time" in the Sunday worship service significant events in the life of the congregation, and in the lives of members of the congregation are shared and a symbol is placed on the banner. At the close of the year the banner is moved to the church hallway where the church family's history for the past six years can be viewed.

The symbols which are usually made of felt are glued to a three-by-five-inch piece of felt to which is added a typewritten explanation and date. Sometimes 3-D symbols are used, such as a rolled scroll tied in a ribbon of the school color for graduates, or a silver ring with a white plastic dove recognizing a marriage.

The yearly banner is prepared by the church women's group, Friendship Circle. The symbols throughout the years have been designed and prepared by two women, Gretchen Eickhorst and Mary Nussbaum. The symbols are taped on the banner, then at the close of the year are glued on in a more permanent fashion.

Maplewood Church has many visitors on Sundays, and is also the home of a nursery school, and is used for Lamaze and Weight Watcher classes. The banners in the hall are always a center of attraction for visitors and provide many opportunities to share the congregation's life with others. In a sense they are a small witness to the community as well as a historical record at a glance and a meaningful way to share special happenings within the church family and life.

THE COM CONNECTION

Meribeth Sprunger

MISSIONARIES, missionary children, or Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) personnel may not reenter the North American atmosphere as dramatically as astronauts, but reentry is a part of their life. The emotions connected with good-byes, crossing from culture to culture, and losses experienced as a result can become much like tangles of barbed wire which encircle, often restricting a person's joy and freedom.

During the weekend of November 19 to 21 a group of missionaries and missionary children from the General Conference as well as recently returned MCC personnel met on the Bethel College campus in North Newton, Kansas. They met to share, discuss, and learn to deal with their feelings and problems in readjusting to a North American lifestyle and culture.

The group was an intergenerational, interdenominational, interorganizational mixture with an interesting flavor. Although diverse, the group was unified by common needs and concerns relating to their reentry into North American culture.

Any change in life presents its own sort of stresses. When people move from one culture to another there are additional stresses.

It was helpful to meet in a mood of openness where the structure allowed frequent one-to-one sharing. There were opportunities to share in the larger group too, not only in discussions but in an artifact "show and tell" time.

The group had time for soul searching and prayer. They had opportunity to learn to know each other, finding common values and experiences. Tools to help cut through the emotional "barbed wire" were suggested by resource people and peers.

Robert and Phyllis Carlson, two of the resource people, led workshops including an introduction to journaling. Robert Kreider spoke on the topic "Do I Have a Place in the Church of North America?" Griselda Shelly, Norma Johnson and Lois Deckert led meditations. The film "Changes" from the series "Begin with Goodbye" was shown.

The weekend was coordinated by Meribeth Sprunger, secretary for missions communications of COM and Norma Johnson, MCC director of personnel development.

The response of the participants was positive. It was felt that this sort of retreat should be available for others in the future.

PROGRAM 5

SHARING OUR STORIES

Jeannie Zehr

WE MENNONITES have in recent years been collecting and sharing many stories of our past. Jim Juhnke shared the stories of our involvements in mission outreach in *A People of Mission*.

Our own Women in Mission organization commissioned our former coordinator, Gladys Goering, to draw together the stories of our struggles, our joys, and our successes through the years in the book *Women in Search of Mission*.

Almost every inter-Mennonite publication that carries advertisements offers for sale some recent addition of a local church history book.

Knowing our history, understanding from whence we have come, and what has shaped us into the people we are today is important. It is a step forward in preparing for the future. It is something to savor, and at points, celebrate, and it is also a tool for helping us live our lives more in tune with God's will.

Maybe we as Mennonites can also learn to share our own personal here-and-now stories. I sense a readiness in our midst in ways that I have never sensed before.

As I stand before groups of women of all ages sharing about the work of WM, I often moan inwardly, "Lord, I'm not getting through. I'm just not communicating."

But when I share my own personal pilgrimage with Christ, including the times I've struggled to grow as a Christian, I get a different response. Somehow people have an "ah-ha" expression on their faces as they identify with my "slices of life."

Consider the Apostle Paul. It was when Paul was open and vulnerable, when he opened his life up, and shared his personal story with others that people listened. They saw how God had worked in Paul, had changed him and worked through him. They identified with him in all his weaknesses and sins.

Who me?

After Christ's death and resurrection we read in Acts 1 about the forty wonderful days which followed, climaxing in Christ's ascension into heaven. The apostles were questioning him, asking, "Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?"

In verses 7 and 8 Jesus says to them, "It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has fixed by his own authority. But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth." (RSV)

All sorrows can be borne if you put them into a story or tell a story about them.

— Isak Dinesen

Christ calls us to be witnesses also. Witnesses to our life in him. Witnesses to our creative wrestling with the rough spots in our lives. Witnesses to our joys and also witnesses to our not so successful experiences.

Our family enjoys laughing at itself, corporately and individually. When we munch popcorn in our camper on a lazy summer vacation evening, or late Christmas Eve as we stretch out on the living room floor after our traditional buffet treat, you'll no doubt hear, "Remember when Mom fell down the steps of that big ship up at the Soo Locks? She bounce, bounce, bounced and her sandals came off and bounced down ahead of her!"

Or, "I'll never forget when Mark knocked that sugar bowl off the table at the restaurant in . . ."

Each "remember when" sets all four of us off into laughter, adding our own thoughts and reactions, while holding our sides and blinking back tears.

Not until both of my parents were dead did I learn in a small way about their deep love for one another and the deep loneliness they experienced during World War II while my father was in the Navy for three years.

My sister and I uncovered the hundreds of letters written home by our father from the South Pacific as he spent many months on board ship.

It has been like discovering our parents as contemporaries with feelings, fears, and joys such as we would experience.

I have been blessed with parents who enjoyed putting their thoughts down on paper, collecting poems and thoughts of others that spoke to them, and, therefore, even after their deaths continue to share their own personal pilgrimage with me, my sister, and my brother.

We each have a story to share. God calls us to share.

Why me?

Each of us has her own set of friends, her own circle of contacts and relationships. Each person is needed.

We need to become more aware of the fact that other people are much like us. They hurt as we hurt, fear as we fear, and need love as we need love.

We may have the keys in our lives, in our hands, to unlock the lives of others to a deeper relationship and walk with Christ.

In the Gospel of John when Jesus' good friend, Lazarus, died, was buried, and later was brought forth from the tomb by Jesus, the healing process was not complete.

When Lazarus came out of the tomb his hands and feet were still bound with bandages and his face was wrapped with a cloth. Jesus turned to the many friends of Lazarus who were gathered there and said, "Unbind him, and let him go."

We too are called to help unbind the lives of others. It may be the lives of persons who have never known Christ and it also may be the unbinding of lives for a deeper, closer walk with Christ.

Webster says that evangelism is the *winning* or *revival* of personal commitments to Christ. Often we Christians get stopped on the "winning" part of this definition. Evangelism is also very much the *reviving* of personal commitment to Christ.

Years ago I heard someone say that persons should commit as much of themselves as they know and understand to as much of Christ as they know and understand at that particular moment in life.

This made sense to me, and helped me to understand the importance of commitment, growth, and recommitment all through one's life pilgrimage.

We need to help others discover how Christ can work in their lives by sharing how he is at work in our own lives.

What will I share?

Eight years ago when I became the editor of *Window to Mission*, I wanted in some way to let my personal walk with God come through: to let the readers know me as a flesh and blood friend with problems and joys much like their own.

Jesus left the house and went to the lakeside, where he sat down to teach. The crowd that gathered around him was so large that he got into a boat and sat in it, while the crowd stood on the shore. He used parables to tell them many things.

Matthew 13:1-3 TEV

This desire gave birth to the regular "slice of life" page. What is shared on this page is often very ordinary, but an area of my own life in which God is working with me.

During the weeks prior to our son Mark's leaving for his freshman year in college, my husband and I worked many hours writing a book to give to him. It was sort of a "letting-go-of-the-apron-strings" process. We shared with him slices of our loaf of life together. Memories about him as a baby, child, and young man and our feelings and thoughts along the way.

We shared what we hoped we had conveyed to him through our words and lifestyle. We included thoughts on alcohol, sex, marriage, and one's relationship to God.

We shared our pride in what a fine young man he is and our prayers and support for his future.

It was work, but exciting, and good therapy for us as we "let go." For him it is a volume we think he'll long treasure and, maybe, someday pass on to his own children so that they may better know him and us. It was well worth every minute and cramped hand muscle!

When I state theological truths in which I believe, someone may argue with me. Theology is a difficult subject on which to agree. But, when I share an experience, something that has happened to me, no one can argue. They may not feel my understanding of something is right, but they can't disagree that I've had the experience.

Ralph Milton says, "Stories should be hard to tell. Like panning for gold, it should be hard work because you keep sifting and sifting as new sparkles of meaning keep coming to the surface. But it's never finished. If the story is really alive to you, you never reach the end of its meaning."

But how will I share?

Sharing those "new sparkles" of life that come to the surface can be scarey. It's risky. It may mean sweaty hands, a pounding heart, and afterward, feelings of insecurity.

To be so vulnerable to others is difficult. What if they use your story to hurt you? What if they misunderstand? What if they take your soul which you've laid in front of them and bruise it?

But — maybe, just maybe the other person will also share, lay his or her soul before you. Love and trust will join you together as you walk closer to Christ. We are responsible only to share our lives. God is responsible for using that sharing to help others.

Share your life's drama. Don't preach and draw conclusions for the listener. Let your story stand on its own two feet and speak for itself.

Share what God has done and give him credit. Share how he has done it. Share spontaneously, in your own way of speaking, not as you think someone else would do it.

Share honestly and simply. Be sure to remember that you are only sharing one chapter in your life so your story is "to be continued" and everything isn't tied up in a neat little package.

Above all, pray. Pray that God will use your story and guide your telling. Pray that through your telling you too will grow and learn more about yourself and your walk with God.

Eudora Welty in *The Eye of the Story* says, "Some stories leave a train of light behind them, meteorlike, so that much later than they strike our eyes, we may see their meaning like an after effect."

God loves us deeply and because of his love has created us uniquely, not as his puppets. Each of us must therefore creatively wrestle with her or his own problems.

As you are willing to share the stories of your own creative growing experiences, maybe the light that is shed will help others to work creatively with God at understanding their own relationship and walk with him.

PROGRAM "HOW-TO" IDEAS

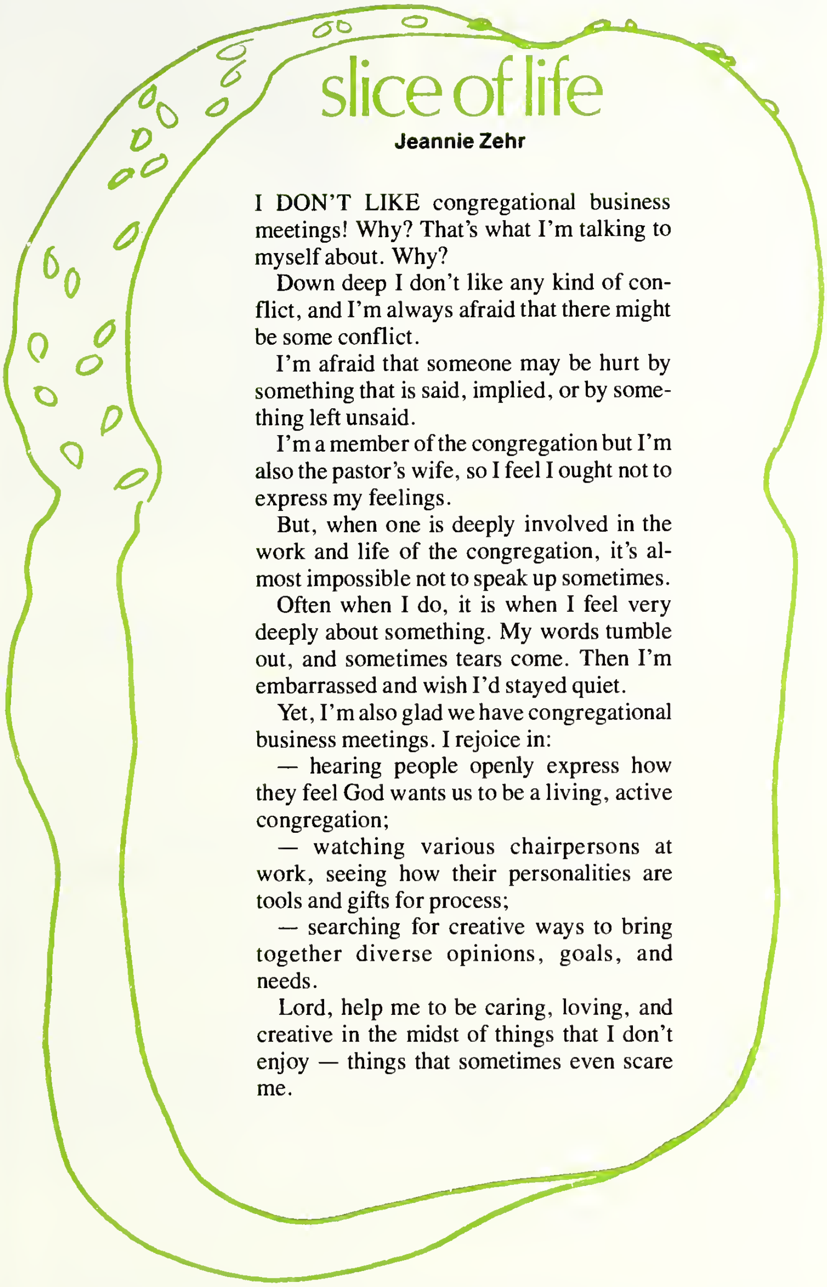
1. Have one person give a brief summary of the program on the previous pages. Ahead of time ask several members to be prepared to share a brief "slice of life" from their own experiences. Introduce this by reading several "slice of life" columns from *Window to Mission*. These could be your devotional time.

2. Plan your program as a "journaling" time. After an introduction to the subject, ask the women to quickly jot down their responses to the following questions (sometimes referred to as "Quaker Questions"):
    a. Where did you live between the ages of seven and twelve years?
    b. How was your house heated?
    c. Where was the center of warmth in your home? Why? Who made it that?
    d. When did God become more than just a name to you?

Break your larger group up into small groups of three to six persons. Encourage sharing of the responses to the questions as a small beginning in sharing our stories. Close with prayer while holding hands in each small group.

3. Another approach for groups that are hesitant to share is to divide into small groups, even groups of two. Ask them to share with one another about some easy-to-talk-about subject such as: how she met her spouse, or a memory of a childhood holiday. After each person shares, invite the others in each group to share at what points in the story just told they could identify or felt like they were in the story too.

4. For devotions consider using the material in the 1982-83 "Devotional/Resource Packet" available for $1 from the WM Office, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.



slice of life

Jeannie Zehr

I DON'T LIKE congregational business meetings! Why? That's what I'm talking to myself about. Why?

Down deep I don't like any kind of conflict, and I'm always afraid that there might be some conflict.

I'm afraid that someone may be hurt by something that is said, implied, or by something left unsaid.

I'm a member of the congregation but I'm also the pastor's wife, so I feel I ought not to express my feelings.

But, when one is deeply involved in the work and life of the congregation, it's almost impossible not to speak up sometimes.

Often when I do, it is when I feel very deeply about something. My words tumble out, and sometimes tears come. Then I'm embarrassed and wish I'd stayed quiet.

Yet, I'm also glad we have congregational business meetings. I rejoice in:

— hearing people openly express how they feel God wants us to be a living, active congregation;

— watching various chairpersons at work, seeing how their personalities are tools and gifts for process;

— searching for creative ways to bring together diverse opinions, goals, and needs.

Lord, help me to be caring, loving, and creative in the midst of things that I don't enjoy — things that sometimes even scare me.

Modern miracle

Continued from page 4

Heather arrived at Children's Hospital in only twenty minutes. She was immediately examined by medical specialists. Many tests were done to assess the damage.

X-rays revealed there were only mild surface burns, similar to a severe sunburn. There was no damage to her vital organs. The doctors were pleased with her strong heartbeat and her ability to breathe on her own.

Their main concern was her brain which had begun to swell. She was making uncontrolled responses and she was also experiencing convulsions — all signs of brain damage.

We still had not been able to see Heather and so all I describe is what emergency room personnel shared with us later.

God's mighty power was being revealed to the doctors and nurses. The doctors were overwhelmed with how she was showing amazing signs of improvement. They told us that they could tell that people were praying for her. Her abnormal responses were becoming normal, positive responses. She was put into the intensive care unit.

When Nikki and I first saw Heather we hardly recognized her. She looked like she was just being kept alive by machines. She was connected to a heart and blood pressure monitor. A respirator was breathing for her so her body could rest and it also gave her more concentrated oxygen. She had intravenous tubes in both arms. She had a tube into her stomach and one into her bladder.

She had been given a drug to reduce the swelling of her brain, and another to paralyze her muscles so that she could rest better. It caused every muscle to completely relax. We couldn't tell whether or not she was conscious as long as she was on this drug.

The nurse told us to talk to her because she might be able to hear us even if she didn't respond.

I whispered in her ear, "Heather, Mommy's here. Can you hear me?" I stroked her hair and longed to hold her close but there were too many tubes in the way. All we could do was wait and pray.

Heather Sohar

We stayed in the lobby for three nights, visiting her for twenty minutes every four hours. This was a difficult time for our whole family. We were torn between Heather, wanting to be there if she should awaken, and wanting to be with Lisa and Benjamin, to comfort them during this traumatic time.

God took care of all of us. Both Nikki and I are blessed to have both sets of parents living nearby and they willingly took over for us at home. Other family members and friends also helped.

By Saturday evening, two days after Heather was struck, the major physical problem was her lungs. They were congested, and she had developed pneumonia. I was feeling very discouraged. We had been waiting for so many hours and had seen so little change in her condition.

Nikki and I prayed together and decided to stay at the hospital one more night. We both felt God's leading us to stay.

On Sunday morning at eight o'clock the

third day in the hospital, the nurses called us back to Heather's room. She was calling for us!

Nikki and I ran from the lobby to Heather's room almost as fast as we had run to the garden that awful night she had been struck.

We met the doctors in the hall and they explained that she was off the respirator and paralyzing drug.

When we got to Heather's room, she was sitting up in bed with her eyes wide open. When the nurse asked, "Who came to see you?" she answered, "Mommy! Oh, Mommy!"

It was like hearing her say it for the first time. What joy filled our hearts!

Heather progressed steadily each day. Her pneumonia improved rapidly and she got rid of her tubes one by one. On Monday she was getting out of bed, and by Tuesday she was reading the cards she had received. By Wednesday she was completely free of tubes and heart monitor. Thursday she had an electroencephalograph to determine how her brain was functioning. The results were normal!

Every time a doctor came into Heather's room, he would shake his head in amazement and stare at her. Several told us it was a miracle that she was alive, not to mention the healing that had already taken place in her body.

How excited and happy everyone was when on Saturday, the ninth day after being struck, we brought Heather home. She went back to school less than two weeks after the accident. She has been totally healed and is back to her normal routine.

Looking back, Nikki and I see how everything fits together like pieces to a puzzle. We see God's perfect timing and complete control. His power and majesty have been shown to us as never before.

We feel that God set the stage for a miracle and we were chosen, along with many others, to play a very special part in that miracle. We have seen how God used people as instruments to carry out his work.

We believe God could have raised Heather to life again right out in the garden that night for only our family to see. But instead, God chose to use many people so that his power could be displayed and many lives could be touched. We praise him that he chose to do it the way he did!

When you can tell me your story, and I can bring to it my own peculiar way of seeing things, then your story can speak to where I live. I may change it around a bit in the process. If you can accept my doing, then your story becomes a precious gift to me, and I make it truly my own. Sharing a story is an act of trust.

— Ralph Milton

WM office jottings from Joan

Several changes in the Women in Mission constitution need to be made at the triennial conference in July. According to the WM constitution, amendments may be made at any regular meeting by the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the delegate body convened at the conference business session. The official WM paper must publish the amendments at least three months prior to the conference session.

These are the proposed changes to be voted upon at Bethlemen '83 conference:

ARTICLE IV - Officers and Elections Section 1. (Should be changed to read):

The officers of this organization shall be: a president; a U.S. vice-president, who must reside in the United States; a Canadian (General Conference) vice-president, who must reside in Canada; and a secretary.

ARTICLE IV - Section 3 (delete): "the chairman of YMW"

ARTICLE IV - Bylaw 1. B, C, D, E and F are deleted and replaced completely with the following:

B. The U.S. vice-president and Canadian (General Conference) vice-president shall cooperate with the president in promoting the work of the association. In the absence of the president, the vice-president with the most seniority shall preside and exercise all of the powers of the president. Each vice-president shall cooperate with the president in promoting the work of the association in her respective country.

C. The secretary shall keep the minutes of regular and special meetings and shall conduct official correspondence as needed.

D. The executive committee shall appoint WM members to represent the organization on the commissions and seminary board of the General Conference, the AIMM board, and the MCC peace section.

E. No officer or member of a committee shall hold office for more than two consecutive terms. Filling a vacancy shall be considered a term if the person serves at least a full triennium.

ARTICLE IV - Bylaw 2. D, E, F, G and H are deleted and replaced entirely with the following:

D. Each district adviser shall be responsible for promoting the work of children in mission outreach in her own district.

E. A nominating committee of three persons appointed by the advisory council shall nominate two persons for every office to be filled. Additional nominations from the floor shall be called for.

F. The executive committee shall apoint the adviser chairperson whose term shall begin after the General Conference sessions.

G. Vacancies occurring among the officers shall be filled by the executive committee. The appointee shall hold office until the next regular meeting of the advisory council. At this meeting a member shall be appointed for the unexpired term.

H. The literature committee shall appoint its own chairperson at the council meeting in odd-numbered years.

I. Expenses: 1. There shall be an advisers' pool with each district sharing equally in the expenses involved for advisers to attend Council of Commissions. 2. The district or province shall pay the expenses of its invited representative in attendance.

Amend the Constitution and Bylaws so that at every point where the word *chairman* is used it shall be replaced with the word *chairperson*.

contributors

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Meribeth Sprunger (The COM Connection) serves as secretary of Missions Communications with the Commission on Overseas Mission. She was born and raised on the mission field in Taiwan and so brings much firsthand experience to her work. She is an active member of the Bethel College Mennonite Church and enjoys biking, swimming, playing volleyball, and spending time with people.

Jeannie Zehr (Program 5: Sharing Our Stories) edits *Window to Mission* from her home in Fort Wayne, Indiana. She is the mother of a college-age son and a daughter who is a junior in high school. Her husband Marv pastors the Maplewood Mennonite Church where Jeannie is also employed as director of the church nursery school.

Joan Wiebe (WM Office Jottings) serves as coordinator for the General Conference Women in Mission. She is actively involved in Faith Mennonite Church, Newton, Kansas, where her husband is pastor. They are the parents of three children, one in high school and two in college.

credits

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Becky
Sohar

Jeannie
Zehr

forecast

"True Wisdom for Christian Peacemakers" will be the main focus for the June-July issue of *Window to Mission*. The program-lesson on this topic will be written by Gloria Miller of Sioux Falls, South Dakota. Peacemaking includes justice for all people. Christian peacemakers must have a divine perspective. The lesson will be based on James 3:17, 18.

Printed in U.S.A.

bright ideas

THEY COME AND THEY GO — that's the way of traditional Easter treats. The candy comes and quickly goes as mothers and children argue about how much is appropriate to eat at one time. Stuffed bunnies and chicks come, and are loved and cuddled for awhile, and then they go to the toy box or join the collection already on the bed.

One Kansas grandmother gave an Easter treat that was meant to come and go! Grandma, an excellent seamstress who has spent years sewing garments for the Mennonite Central Committee, gave each of her grandchildern, all granddaughters, an MCC Sewing Kit for Easter.

The children were instructed to look at the kit, to think about it, and then prepare to give it to MCC. Several days later Grandma took her granddaughters with her to the MCC Center in North Newton. They delivered the special kits and sent them on their way abroad.

The little girls didn't miss the candy or stuffed animals. Instead they dreamed about young girls somewhere in the world who are learning how to sew, using the kits which they gave. Maybe the persons who received the kits will even be able to sew as well as Grandma someday. Who knows?

— Judy Schrag

Bread in its many forms is a welcome addition to our daily meals. For many in the world it is the only meal.

A Festival of Breads held in an Ohio church was reported in *Leaven*, a publication of Bread for the World. The festival featured a variety of breads and demonstrated how to make them at home. It also highlighted world hunger and various organizations working toward solving hunger problems at home and abroad.

Yeast and quick breads made from whole grain flours can be featured at such a festival. Special holiday breads could be displayed. Pita bread, *chapatis*, French bread, *zwieback*, and other nationality breads could be displayed, or how to make them could be demonstrated.

Short presentations about world hunger and ways to help alleviate it could be made during the festival. Short talks, filmstrips, displays of literature, and pictures of MCC workers at work could also be educational features.

Slices of bread, rolls, and loaves of bread could be sold, with the proceeds going toward an organization which works to relieve world hunger.

A Festival of Breads lends itself to a half-day program for your women's group, or a special community time, or even as an addition to an MCC Relief Sale.

Aids for planning such a festival are available from Art and Jocele Meyer, Development Education Office, MCC, Akron, PA 17501.

"The Meeting House of God's People" is the theme of a church facilities workshop to be held April 22-23 at the Zion Mennonite Church, Archbold, Ohio. LeRoy Troyer, Mishawaka, Ind., and Jan Gleysteen, Scottdale, Pa., will be the featured speakers. The workshop is cosponsored by the Ohio, Indiana-Michigan, and Central District conferences and the Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries. For more information write to Zion Mennonite Church, 300 Short-Buehrer Road, Archbold, OH 43502, or call 419/445-3796.

A group of Mennonite non-registrant men and one woman met in Washington Feb. 12-13 to organize and establish a National Mennonite Non-registrant Coordinating Committee. Members present were Dave Boshart, Mike Hurst and Juanita Shirk of Eastern Mennonite College, Harrisonburg, Va.; Jon Nafzinger, Greg Smucker and David Leaman of Goshen (Ind.) College; David Lohrentz of Bethel College, North Newton, Kan.; and Andre Gingerich of Swarthmore College. Objectives for the newly formed committee include establishing a national network of Mennonite resisters and familiarizing the church with the non-registrants' position.

U.S. nuclear weapons are so poorly protected at some West European storage sites that experts fear that a handful of terrorists could storm a site and seize a nuclear warhead. In recent secret mock exercises, five- to eight-member U.S. Special Forces teams have stormed the fences, overwhelmed the guards and claimed possession of the world's most potent blackmail threat — a nuclear warhead — in under 30 minutes.

Warkentine put on probation, signs modified registration form

Wichita, Kan. — Kendal Warkentine, the 21-year-old Mennonite convicted on Dec. 2 of failing to register for the draft, was sentenced to two years of unsupervised probation in a Wichita federal court on March 7, on the condition that he sign a registration form modified by Selective Service to indicate that he is a conscientious objector.

"They've basically given me something I can live with. . . . I had no choice; now they've given me a choice," Warkentine said outside the courthouse after the proceedings.

Junior Elder, Selective Service director for Kansas, personally delivered the special form to a Wichita probation office two days later. In section 8, where the form reads, "I affirm the foregoing statements are true," the following words had been added: ". . . and hereby declare that I am conscientiously opposed to serving in the armed forces." Warkentine signed his name on the bottom line.

In handing down the sentence, Judge Sam Crow was critical of Selective Service's prosecution of only those young men who had admitted their non-compliance with the registration order. "The procedure has been that names and addresses of silent non-registrants are not made known to the United States attorneys for them to pursue justice. Identity of silent non-registrant violators has been known to other federal agencies and withheld from the Attorney General, thereby effectively negating his law enforcement discretion. Such a justice procedure is unusual when a government agency withholds the identity of thousands of federal felony violators from the Attorney General," Crow said.

Warkentine expresses gratitude to his supporters after the sentencing.

"I am concerned that the job of insuring compliance with the registration law has fallen heavily on the judiciary. It is certainly the duty of the courts to enforce the laws of this country, yet it is also the concern of the courts that the nation's laws be applied fairly and indiscriminately. . . . Enforcement of the registration law should not depend upon the method as employed here of prosecuting those . . . who communicate their decision not to register based upon personal conviction."

Judge Crow went on to place Warkentine on "unsupervised probation for a period of two years," on the condition that he register within 10 days on a modified form. "Observations have been made that registration forms do not provide for conscientious objector status to be claimed. A right to such a claim is historically recognized," Crow said. "The defendant has stated to the probation officer that he would probably have registered had the registration form allowed him to make such a distinction, and it is the decision of this court that the defendant should be given an opportunity to register and claim such status in conformance with his testimony and convictions.

"A special term and condition of the probation is therefore provided that the defendant shall register within 10 days before the Kansas Director of Selective Service . . . who shall provide a registration form that shall accommodate the defendant to register and claim his conscientious conviction."

More than 60 supporters and observers, along with almost 20 media representatives, crowded the courtroom for the sentencing. Nearly 100 more stood outside the building in a silent vigil throughout the hour-long proceeding.

In a voice shaken by emotion and gratitude, Warkentine thanked the gathered crowd on the courthouse steps immediately after the sentencing. "I think what happened today is not so much anything we did, but the result of your prayers and concern. . . ."

Although the sentence was seen by many as a victory for Warkentine and a vindication of his concern about the lack of provision on registration forms for conscientious objectors, the implications of the ruling for other cases is still uncertain. A story in the March 11 *Wichita Eagle-Beacon* quoted Joan Lamb, a federal Selective Service employee, as downplaying the significance of the decision. "That's not a problem," Lamb said. "We've accepted other [registrations] like that without a judge's ruling."

The article continues, ". . . the 'conscientious objector' designation on the forms 'doesn't mean anything really,' she said. No one who registers now is classified into levels of acceptability because there is no draft, Lamb said."

Other observers claimed that Judge Crow's ruling represents an important legal precedent, in that it required Selective Service to recognize the rights of conscientious objectors within the registration process itself, and not only at the time of classification.

Meanwhile, Charles Epp, the other General Conference Mennonite to be charged with failing to register, is scheduled to face trial on April 5. *Larry Cornies*

The General Board of Friends United Meeting endorsed the World Peace Tax Fund at its fall meeting in October 1982 in Richmond, Ind. According to an FUM news release, "the endorsement came in response to a letter from the General Conference Mennonites, requesting that FUM join them in supporting WPTF."

Hearing reports of bodies being dumped at a stream not far from where he lives in the Philippines, MCC worker Dan Epp-Tiessen went with a friend to investigate. They found no bodies, but they discovered fear from the people they met in the barrios. Epp-Tiessen writes: "Scores of people believed that bodies of murdered victims had been dumped, virtually in their backyards. Yet no one had gone to investigate because possible repercussions were so terrifying. This fear is such a contrast to the image Philippine officials attempt to convey to the United States."

Mary Sprunger-Froese, 33, a Mennonite and member of the Bijou House Community in Colorado Springs, Colo., and Patricia McCormick, 47, a Sister of Laredo from Denver, entered the Rocky Flats Nuclear Weapons Plant near Denver on Feb. 16, prayed and poured blood on crosses. A prepared statement said (in part): "Today, Ash Wednesday, we . . . prayed for the victims of the nuclear arms race, especially those who suffer hunger, homelessness and betrayal. We prayed for our own repentance and for a change of heart in those who work at the plant, that we may all follow the way of peace. . . ." They were arrested and held in Denver County Jail.

Mexican Mennonites assisting Guatemalan refugees

San Cristobal de las Casas, Mexico (MCC) — Ruben Zuniga, representative for the Evangelical Mennonite Church in Mexico City, visited southern Mexico early this year to observe the refugee situation there. He reports the situation is deteriorating with more Guatemalan refugees continuing to flee into Mexico.

The United Nations now estimates that there are 100,000 Guatemalan refugees in southern Mexico. Zuniga had earlier visited southern Mexico last July with Philip Hofer, Mennonite Central Committee worker.

The Mexican Mennonite churches responded to Zuniga's reports on the desperate situation by collecting clothing and food to distribute to the refugees in San Cristobal. Zuniga also visited with Mennonites in the Los Jagueyes Colony in northern Mexico.

In November Mennonites from northern Mexico sent a truckload of supplies and donated enough money to buy five truckloads of corn flour, beans, milk powder, coffee and sugar for the refugees. They were met at the border area with uncooperative government officials in Chiapas until they showed their Mexican citizenship papers. They were then able to deliver the aid to five refugee camps and talk with the refugees.

In January more representatives of the Mennonites made another food delivery in Chiapas. According to one leader, "Once one has visited the area, one cannot forget the problem as easily."

The situation along the border between Guatemala and Mexico has been tense due to incursions by the Guatemalan army. During the last week of January Guatemalan soldiers crossed into Mexico and killed three Guatemalan refugees and kidnapped another two in attacks on refugee camps.

According to one source, "A number of relief workers, Mexicans and residents of the refugee camps witnessed the attacks, and they said in both instances the soldiers crossed clearly marked sections of the border to gain access to the camps." The Mexican government has publicly protested the incursions.

Guatemalan peasant children in Mexico

Guatemalan president Rios Montt has denied that such attacks have taken place, and has claimed that the camps in Mexico are "communist bases."

The refugees also talk of suffering they faced before fleeing to Mexico. One refugee in Mexico, who was forced to flee his home in San Marcos in November 1982, reported, "The army bombed the village for two days. First a helicopter arrived, then eight planes came. The army then burned all the houses and killed 14 people on Nov. 25. The next day they killed more and they tied up others, including children, by the neck, and they died that way. We have nothing now, not even food, because that is lost and burned; the same with our crops in the field."

The Mexican government has said that they are handling the problem themselves and discourage foreign relief agencies from working in the area. Since Mennonites in Mexico are helping in the area, MCC has tried to encourage their work, rather than approach the Mexican government for permission to do refugee work with the Guatemalans. According to one visitor to the camps, "The government professes to do more for the refugees than they really do."

Although officially protecting the refugees and protesting the Guatemalan government's treatment of its citizens, the Mexican government has pressured the refugees to return to their home country. On Oct. 27 two camps were demolished by regional immigration officials forcing approximately 3,000 refugees to flee into the Mexican hillsides and neighboring villages. *Joy C. Hofer*

Village reconstruction completed after three years

Calcutta, India (MCC) — Formerly Pedagottipadu, the village is now called Bethlehem. That is the name 130 weaver-caste families chose for the new village they built with help from Village Reconstruction Organization (VRO) and Mennonite Central Committee.

Feb. 1 was inauguration day for Bethlehem — a day of celebration to culminate the completion of over three years of waiting and working for the estimated 650 villagers.

For the villagers the process began shortly after a devastating cyclone in 1978 swept the eastern coastal region of Andhra Pradesh, causing the death of thousands and untold destruction of property, housing and local infrastructure. For VRO, headed by Jesuit Father Michael Windey, it was a crisis but also an opportunity for progress. For MCC it was an opportunity to support and work alongside with the villagers and VRO in development-oriented relief.

For VRO, village reconstruction is

(continued on following page)

A 15-year-old boy of Kilgore, Texas, who had told one of his brothers he wanted to donate his organs when he died to help others, was killed in February in a local traffic accident, a few days after expressing that desire. Anthony Pennington's last wish helped five patients in three cities: His heart was transplanted into a patient in St. Louis, two Dallas patients received his kidneys and his corneas were donated to two patients in Tyler, Texas.

Lagos, Nigeria — A Jan. 17 expulsion order by the Nigerian government sent as many as 3 million illegal foreigners scrambling to get back to their home countries before Jan. 31. Although the deadline was later moved to the end of February, the chaotic rush to leave Nigeria has resulted in massive dislocation of unskilled laborers originally from Ghana, Chad, Upper Volta, Niger and Cameroon. Mennonite Central Committee plans to send a worker to Ghana, where as many as 2 million of the displaced will resettle, to investigate the situation and recommend a response.

Taster's Choice is the newest target in the boycott against Nestle. This product alone accounts for the largest percent of Nestle's sales in the United States. INFACT, the Infant Formula Action Coalition, reports that after a five-year struggle, the goal of getting Nestle to change its alleged life-threatening promotion of infant formula in developing countries is now within reach. So far the boycott has cost Nestle over $1 billion in direct expenses and lost revenues.

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more than simply rebuilding physical structures. VRO believes that village reconstruction must also involve rebuilding the social fabric of the community. Thus, when villagers come for assistance, the first question VRO asks them is, "What have you ever done together?"

The villagers from Bethlehem had to pass a test to prove they could work together. Their test was to build a several-hundred-meter road and build a bridge over a nearby stream. After they completed this work, using only their own hands, resources and organization, did VRO agree to work together with them.

MCC personnel, who were secunded to VRO, helped with Bethlehem's reconstruction. MCC worker Richard Baerg of Coaldale, Alta., designed the village layout and a suitable house type considering the weavers' occupation and the local climate. Fred and Minh Kauffman of West Point, Neb., assisted in the construction and helped launch *balwadi* (education) programs for village children and their mothers. Kathy Good of Petersburg, Ont., managed the VRO office.

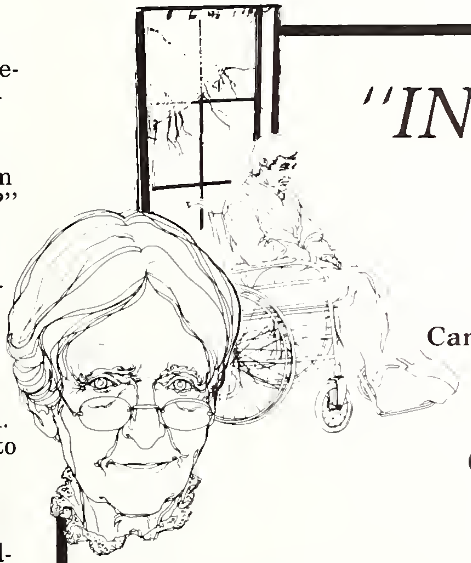
Each family contributed voluntary labor to construct the houses that remained undesignated and unoccupied until all were completed.

Reconstructing the village took much time, but perhaps the process was as important as the physical structures built.

Attention

The Kroeger (Kruger) family reunion will be held July 30-31, 1983, at Rosthern Junior College, Rosthern, Sask. All descendants of Anna (nee Dyck) and Johann Krüger (1754-1823), a clockmaker who immigrated from West Prussia to Rosenthal, S.D., in 1804.

For information and registration contact:
Abe Kroeger
446 Costigan Road
Saskatoon, SK S7J 3P8
Phone 306/373-5626.



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The Mennonite churches of Philadelphia are celebrating "Three Hundred Years Since Germantown" on April 24. A song fest will be held in the sanctuary of the First United Methodist Church of Germantown. Seven choirs will perform a concert of praise and then join to form a mass choir to highlight the day.

The 1983 Faith and Farm Forum in Meadows, Ill., called on central Illinois Christian farmers to treat the environment as God's creation. Emerson Nafziger, assistant professor of agronomy at the University of Illinois, spoke to about 125 farm men and women at Meadows Mennonite Church on Jan. 15. Nafziger outlined the development of pesticides for agricultural use, discussed health and environmental problems of pesticides and urged responsible pesticide use through the practice of integrated pest management. The Faith and Farm Forum is an annual event organized by a committee of farmers from several Illinois Mennonite congregations.

Richard Schertz, Tiskilwa; Paul Adair, Delevan; and Robert Rowe, Dalton City (left to right), discuss farm practices during a break in the afternoon forum session.

CALENDAR

Aug. 1-7 — General Conference Triennial Sessions and Mennonite Church General Assembly, Lehigh University, Bethlehem, Pa., theme: "Christ the Cornerstone"

Canada

May 7 — Saskatchewan Women in Mission annual conference, Luseland

July 8-12 — Conference of Mennonites in Canada, Winnipeg

Central

April 7-10 — Central District Conference, Pandora, Ohio

Eastern

April 28 - May 1 — Eastern District Conference, West Swamp Church, Quakertown, Pa.

Northern

June 16-19 — Northern District Conference, Bethesda Church, Henderson, Neb.

Pacific

June 16-19 — Pacific District Conference, Glendale Church, Lynden, Wash.

MINISTERS

Norman Bartel, formerly pastor of Mayfair Church, Saskatoon, is now pastor of the Church of the Open Door in Winnipeg, an inner-city ministry.

Richard Bucher has resigned as pastor at Topeka (Ind.) Church, effective July 31, and will become pastor at Tiefengrund Rosenort Church, Laird, Sask., beginning in August.

Otto Dirks, former missionary in Taiwan and now interim pastor at St. Catharines (Ont.) United Mennonite Church, will become pastor at the Niagara United Mennonite Church, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ont., Sept. 1.

John Freed left the Germantown (Pa.) Church last year and began a preaching ministry at First Church, Huntingdon Valley, Pa., in January.

John R. Friesen, pastor of Home Street Church, Winnipeg, will become pastor at St. Catharines (Ont.) United Mennonite Church next January.

Doug Good was ordained and installed as pastor at Hereford Church, Bally, Pa., in September 1982.

Henry Goossen has resigned as pastor at First Church, Halstead, Kan., effective in April.

John Krahn, who has served as pastor at Grace Church, Winkler, Man., for 12 years, has resigned.

Allan Martin resigned from Hopefield (Kan.) Church at the end of February.

Ted Regier, pastor at West Swamp Church, Quakertown, Pa., was ordained in August 1982.

Barry Schmell began serving as youth pastor at West Swamp Church, Quakertown, Pa., on Oct. 1, 1982.

Norman Schmidt, pastor at East Swamp Church, Quakertown, Pa., has announced that he will "phase out" his ministry there after 20 years of service.

Kenneth Schrag has resigned as pastor at Zion Church, Swift Current, Sask., effective in June, after serving four years.

John Schrock began serving as associate pastor at Zion Church, Souderton, Pa., Feb. 1. He is a graduate of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Ind.

Reuben Siemens has resigned as pastor at Emmaus Church, Wymark, Sask., after serving six years.

Dave Slautterback began serving as pastor at Conewago Community Chapel, Manchester, Pa., in March, replacing *Dave Keener*.

Don Steelberg has resigned as pastor at First Church, Wadsworth, Ohio, effective Aug. 31. He has served there since 1968. Previously he served as associate pastor at Lorraine Avenue Church, Wichita, Kan., for three years.

Thomas Warnier began serving as pastor at Erie View United Mennonite Church, Port Rowan, Ont., Jan. 1 and was installed Feb. 13.

James Wenger resigned as pastor at Shalom Church, Tucson, Ariz. He will join Mennonite Community Church, Fresno, Calif., in July.

David Whitermore has resigned as pastor at Calvary Church, Liberal, Kan., effective in April, to become executive director of the Church Federation of Greater Chicago.

Herman Wiebe has resigned as pastor at First Church, Eyebrow, Sask., after serving five years, to enroll at Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind.

Marcia Yoder, pastor at Hively Avenue Church, Elkhart, Ind., *Jerry Holsopple*, youth and Christian education minister at First Church, Berne, Ind., and *Nancy Kerr*, pastor at Cincinnati Fellowship, were licensed by the Central District ministerial committee at its Jan. 28 meeting.

WORKERS

H. Ernest Bennett, executive director of the Mennonite Health Association, has been named as recipient of the 1983 American Protestant Hospital Association Citation of Achievement.

Raymond Brubaker, Bethel Church, Lancaster, Pa., has begun a three-year term with Mennonite Central Committee in northern Uganda, where he will work with water resources. He served previously with MCC as a hospital aid

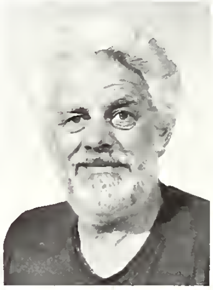
The Winnipeg Chinese Mennonite Church has purchased a building from a Jehovah's Witness group and will take possession of it in May. They will continue to meet in the Bethel Mennonite Church until they can occupy the new facility. The group has talked to an architect and hopes to subcontract for electrical, carpentry, plumbing and plaster work. Jim Penner of Winnipeg is the liaison between the Manitoba Conference and the Winnipeg Chinese Mennonite Church.

The formal report of the Treaty Land Entitlement Commission includes a number of specific recommendations submitted jointly by MCC (Canada) and the Conference of Mennonites in Canada. The report released by commissioner Leon Mitchell on Feb. 2 was favorably received by the Chiefs Land Entitlement Committee. According to the Mitchell report there will be a claim of 790,400 acres allotted to the 26 bands in Manitoba. Should the report be accepted by Manitoba's provincial government and agreed to by the Department of Indian Affairs, then the Indian land selection could begin soon.

Mennonite and Brethren in Christ churches in the past year have responded to needs of the hungry in America by sharing groceries. Why not share fresh produce too? asks the MCC development education office. They suggest people plant extra vegetables and pledge a part of these for those who are needy. The pledged produce can be shared through food pantries, food banks, soup kitchens and temporary markets.

RECORD

Schrock


Brubaker

A. Rempel

H. Rempel

at Kings View in Reedley, Calif. He has five children, Susan Greenwald, Simeon, Sarah, Seth and Sharon.

Leo Driedger has replaced Peter Peters as chairman of the MCC (Manitoba) board, and *Anne Warkentin* has replaced Anne Schmidt as bookkeeper for MCC (Manitoba).

Murray and *Ruth Martin* have accepted a further three-year assignment with Native Ministries at Hole River, Man.

Ann Raber became director of Mennonite Mutual Aid's wellness program Jan. 31.

Art and *Helen Rempel*, Bethel Church, Winnipeg, were commissioned there on Jan. 23 for a 3½-year term of service in Taiwan under the Commission on Overseas Mission. After six months of language study, Art will become business manager and share with Helen in responsibilities as host/hostess for the Mennonite Guest House in Taipei. They left Jan. 27 with their 9-year-old daughter Theresa.

Gerald Shank, Akron (Pa.) Church, has been named secretary for personnel services of Mennonite Central Committee. Previously he worked with MCC as secretary for Latin America from 1975-78 and as country representative in Bolivia from 1978-83.

John Stoner, executive secretary of MCC U.S. Peace Section, has been named chairperson of the National Interreligious Service Board for Conscientious Objectors.

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84B, July 6-23, with Oberammergau (18 days, from N.Y.C.)	Wilmer Martin John Ruth
84C, July 7-23 (17 days, from N.Y.C.)	Arnold Cressman David Hostetler
84D, July 30-August 14 with Oberammergau (16 days, from Chicago)	Cal Redekop Virgil Regehr
84E, July 30-August 14, economy tour, youth hostels (16 days, from N.Y.C.)	Alice Roth Willard Roth
Israel 84, July 30-August 11, Israel and Middle East (13 days, from N.Y.C.)	Jan Gleysteen John Lederach Naomi Lederach

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Please apply to:
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Clearbrook, BC V2T 3M7
Phone 604/849-2475.

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Elim Bible Institute is seeking a full-time administrative secretary beginning June 15, 1983. The successful applicant must possess skills and experience in basic office procedures (typing at 50-60 wpm, filing, operating office machines), bookkeeping and drawing up budgets. This job also requires initiative, people-related skills, capabilities in working independently and decision making. The ability to relate well to people in a small setting and an appreciation for the purpose of a Bible school is important as well.

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Elim Bible Institute is seeking a librarian/secretarial assistant on a voluntary service basis initially. Duties include book processing and library maintenance, miscellaneous typing, and editing a quarterly newsletter. Candidates should have a familiarity with books and library operations, typing skills of at least 45 wpm, an ability to relate well to people in a small setting and an appreciation for the purpose of a Bible school. Term of hiring would allow summers free. Position to commence in September 1983, with orientation during April 1983.

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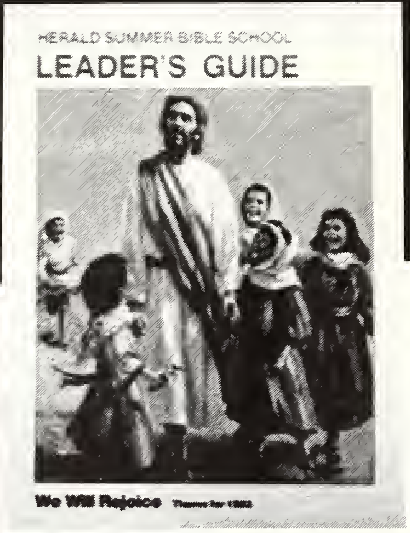

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A new COE executive secretary

Marion Keeney Preheim

"I believe strongly in Christian education. It's more than just Sunday school, clubs and other programs; it is a way of life. All that you are or do influences others. The way we model Jesus Christ has a profound effect on people."

So says John W. Sprunger, academic dean and instructor of Old Testament at Swift Current (Sask.) Bible Institute, who was selected March 7 as the Commission on Education's new executive secretary. He will assume that position sometime during the last half of 1983.

Sprunger had many models early in life. Growing up in a three-generational household on a dairy farm near Berne, Ind., molded his character. He remembers most his grandfather Joel Sprunger. Learning about Christian Sprunger, his direct ancestor and the first pastor of the Berne Mennonite immigrants, influenced him.

However, at 15 he realized he had to make a personal commitment to Jesus as Savior. Two years later a sermon by missionary Gerald Stucky confronted him with making Jesus Lord of his life and going wherever He would send him. Two weeks later a film about a missionary pilot made him look for a college that offered missionary aviation training.

Several tragedies have shaped Sprunger. A 1965 Palm Sunday tornado destroyed his family's house and farm. "I had to be a recipient instead of a giver," he says.

He went to Le Tourneau College in Longview, Texas, to train as a pilot, but after several weeks there decided to concentrate on biblical studies only. A crash two years later in a plane piloted by his roommate gave him a new perspective on life. "When God spared my life, I realized he had things left for me to do," he says.

Two summers during college he went to a camp in New York state for training as a student counselor. There he met Deborah Coffin of Portland, Maine. They were married Aug. 1, 1970, and moved to Winona Lake, Ind., for him to work on his master of divinity degree at Grace Theological Seminary. She trained on the job as a dental assistant.

The couple moved to Berne in 1973 where he served as assistant pastor at First Mennonite Church. He commuted to Winona Lake to work on a master of theology degree.

J. W., Deb, Nathan and Rachel Sprunger

They moved back to Winona Lake in 1975 for his work on his master's thesis. He had a part-time job as Christian education director at Eighth Street Mennonite Church in Goshen, Ind.

Sprunger discerned a need to study Anabaptist thought under scholars such as Clarence Bauman, C. J. Dyck, J. C. Wenger, Guy Hershberger, Myron Augsburger and David Schroeder at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Ind. Jacob Enz, Old Testament professor there, had an influence on him by his warmth and personal interest.

At the AMBS campus he saw an ad for a teaching position at SCBI. After his acceptance, he and his wife moved to Swift Current in 1976. He taught Old Testament and Christian education.

He also agreed to be the Saskatchewan COE *Foundation Series* resource person and a member on the education committee for the Conference of Mennonites in Saskatchewan. He offered workshops, first asking people what they needed and shaping the event around their ideas.

As Saskatchewan representative he came to Council of Commissions in March. "I see the potential in people," he said in reflecting on the meetings. "I see it in the commission members, staff and others here. I'd like the person out there in the congregation to experience what I've experienced this week. We have to communicate to people the biblical understanding of Christian education and that Jesus Christ is the ultimate model."

Sprunger's taking the COE job was a family decision. "If one of COE's emphases is the family, then we should be introduced as a family," he said. J. W. and Deb have two children: 4-year-old Nathan and 14-month-old Rachel.

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The Holy Spirit moves among us

Henry Harder

I have often been present at meetings where the topic of evangelization is being discussed. Usually the conversation centers around the lack of appropriate evangelists from our own denomination and the unavailability of the few who are qualified. Hence, few churches seem to make any efforts toward conducting formal evangelization.

I believe that most of us recognize the need for renewal and recommitment in our churches and effective outreach into our communities. We have often seen or been part of efforts by other organizations that have left us dissatisfied. So we have been left with the question of how to reach out. How to effectively fulfill the commission of Matthew 28:19, 20 is a haunting thought that plagues many a church leader, including myself.

It was therefore with great interest that I learned that the church which I had just begun serving had been planning an evangelization event for some time. With a great deal of excitement I got involved. Approximately a year earlier the church had experienced a lay witness weekend. The benefits of this had been so great that another weekend was planned for the future. This became known as Reachout '82.

A group of many committees planned the various aspects of the event. The weekend was to be preceded by several monthly meetings. The community was to be invited to these Sunday evening gatherings, giving them a taste of things to come. Bernie Wiebe had been secured as the speaker for the weekend, and he conducted several preliminary evening sessions.

The weekend began on Friday evening with a fellowship meal followed by Bernie's first presentation, entitled "New Beginnings for Older Beginners." In this address he challenged us to love according to 1 Corinthians 13, to feel good about ourselves and to continually recommit ourselves to a lifestyle of discipleship. Afterward we met in discussion groups which were led by leaders selected earlier and briefed by Bernie.

Saturday began early with a breakfast at which Bernie addressed the question of parent-child relationships. After a short break we gathered together for another session entitled "Children Are a Heritage of the Lord." Here Bernie stressed the importance of familial relationships. He stated that the church must nurture families and provide wholesome learning and social opportunities for children and parents. We completed the morning in our groups discussing the implications of this message.

The afternoon was free for prayer and reflection. By early evening we had gathered for another fellowship meal. Our session with Bernie was entitled "Listen for Growing Relationships." Here he stressed that it was easy to become a Christian but that being one was difficult. We need to surrender ourselves daily — decision by decision — and thereby become acquainted with Christ. Then the better acquainted we are, the more able we are to reach out to others for Christ. Again we closed the evening in our discussion groups. Afterward Bernie and the youth met for a separate session.

On Sunday morning Bernie preached in both German and English. During the English service an altar call was conducted and many came forward. It was a highly emotional experience to see the Holy Spirit working in so many lives.

The afternoon was free so we could reflect on what had happened. We then gathered for another fellowship meal and session with Bernie, this one entitled "Let's Defrost our Frozen Assets." Here we were challenged to use the gifts God has given us. When Bernie finished, we allowed time for sharing. What an incredibly joyful time that was, to experience the Holy Spirit moving among us. The stream of people wanting to share was continuous and we stayed late in God's house that night.

As a church we have received many benefits from this experience. However, the chief benefit has been to individuals. Several people made first-time commitments, and we rejoice with them. The greatest impact, however, has been felt in the many members who have rededicated their lives to Christ and who have found new energy and desire to work in building God's kingdom. In many cases there has been a healing of relationships and renewal of friendships. It has been good to be involved in this process and now to be responsible for channeling this new energy into useful applications.

We continue to experience an atmosphere of hope and love in our congregation. While we are still subject to the temptations of Satan, we refuse to be downtrodden by feelings of doom and despair so prevalent in our world today. We are co-heirs with Christ, we are children of God, we have reason to rejoice.

There are also concerns arising from our experience. Not all of our members participated, and now they feel left out. We desperately wanted to reach out into our community but were only partially successful. Some came, but most stayed away. We consider our weekend a success, but what now? Where to from here?

These are only a few of the questions we will need to answer. But one fact remains; we have been blessed. Many needs were met. We learned again that the Holy Spirit moves in our weakness. While it is true that few non-church people attended, many who did come had their burdens removed and received a wonderful new joy.

Perhaps now having been strengthened, we can more decisively reach out into our community. For wherein lies the strength of the gospel? Surely not in large evangelistic rallies, but rather in the individual disciple, supported by the community of Christ.

Here in the Whitewater Mennonite Church we are humbled by what God has done. We rejoice that he loves us. We pledge to continue to serve him.

Easter

J. O. Schrag

A miracle of newness.
The finality of death yields —
Firm set concrete walls crumble.
Webbed, musty corners become
  fresh and clean.
Tombs open, hearts, minds unlock.
God breaks all chains
In a miracle of newness
On E-a-s-t-e-r.

I joined Choir B

Jonathan Larson

Jonathan Larson is a missionary in Botswana, Southern Africa, under the Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission. He works with the African Independent Churches in the areas of Bible teaching and Christian education. Jonathan and his family arrived in Botswana in 1981. First-term missionaries seek many ways in which to get acquainted with nationals. Jonathan tells of one approach.

Finding the right connections — for hair dryers and linking pronouns — has been the story of our early going here. Among the more memorable connections successfully made came with my adoption into Choir B of the Spiritual Healing Church in Gaborone. I was forewarned that service in "B" was hazardous duty, it being notorious for a rare combination of whimsy and enthusiasm. Rehearsals, I learned to my astonishment, were scheduled every weekday evening and capped off by a jumbo session on Saturday, including Bible study and church cleaning in addition to the usual choirly pursuits. We sing every second Sunday of the month.

Fortified by my previous experience as a sometime church choir director in Minnesota, I attended my first rehearsal on a confident Thursday evening. I emerged two hours later a badly shaken novice chorister having come hard up against the mysteries of the tonic sol-fa system of notation. My bewildered attempts to "wing it" and sing harmonies by ear were quickly drowned out by my fellow basses who promptly turned to sing forcefully into my ears the correct notes and rhythms.

So much for coming to Botswana as *moruti* (Setswana for "pastor"). Even in Choir B I am a rank beginner.

Among our more notable misadventures was a choir competition at which B walked off with top honors, but not before surviving a four-hour delay.

Then there was the time I brought down on the choir the wrath of the powers that be when, as the only one who appeared for a Saturday rehearsal, I began idly to sweep out the church. Two weeks later, B was summoned to give account for the grave offense of forcing Moruti Larson to do its cleaning work. I am still battling to win back the good graces of a few altos. Meanwhile, I have taken an oath (or, better, as a Mennonite, affirmed), that I will never again on pain of excommunication lay hands on the Spiritual Healing Church broom.

The sopranos continue to giggle at the gaucheries I commit in my yet spindly Setswana. But with their willing forbearance and help we continue — all of us in B — to make a joyful if raucous but rhythmic noise before the Lord. Oh, for more such connections!

Good Friday

Louise Dueck

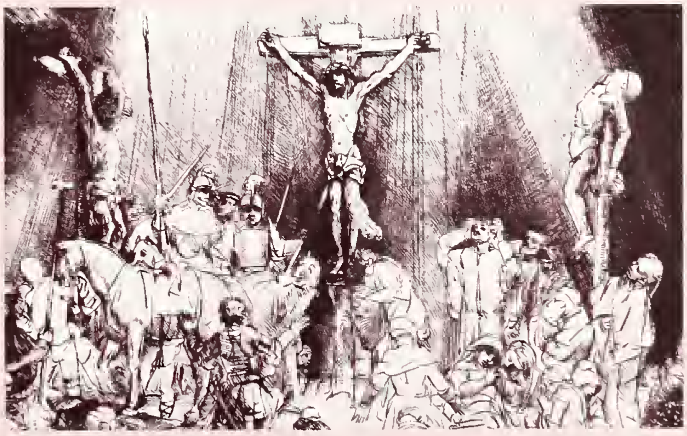
The crown of thorns piercing his brow
   makes exquisite art; it adorns
   the walls of churches and galleries;
has become so acceptable we scrutinize
the technique and obliterate the pain.

His cross, symbol of state-decreed
   capital punishment in his day, a
   horrible condemnation for those so sentenced,
we now wear with impunity
on gold chains around our necks.

If he had died on the chair,
   would we mount replicas
   in our churches? Would we
wear gold-plated electric chairs
around our necks and in our ears?

These symbols which represent such suffering
   have become banalities in our day.
   Have we become immune to suffering
or can we not bear to face
its reality in our lives?

Lord Jesus, break once again to us
   the bread of your body; give us once more
   the blood of your covenant; invite us anew
to participate in your suffering servanthood.
For thy kingdom's sake, Amen.



LETTERS

Information on India?

I am doing some research work on a U.S. Methodist missionary, C. B. Ward, at the turn of the last century in and around Jagdalpur district of Madhya Pradesh of India.

Since Mennonites have worked in this area, is there any chance readers of *The Mennonite* could help me with any information? Please write me. *John Alexander, Seven Oaks, Bala Hisar, Mussoorie (U.P.), India*

Feb. 15

Issue that is "hot"

Homosexuality is the most widely known issue of sexuality today. What was condemned by all the churches a century ago has now become the protected child of many older and traditional denominations. To many evangelical Christians it seems hardly possible that the churches (Anglican, United, U.S. Episcopal, United Presbyterian and others) could be so fast in supporting what was once considered immoral by even most people outside of Christianity.

By understanding the liberal view of Scripture it is not hard to see how this came about.

The United Church of Christ presents a case in defense of homosexuality exemplary of that by the majority of groups. They claim the key passage of Scripture used by evangelicals (the destruction of Sodom and its inhabitants) is invalid. Since the word translated "to know" in the passage is not explicit, they charge that the sin of Sodom was lack of hospitality and not sexual aggression of men with men.

The next most significant passage used is the Levitical law which is represented as being full of cultural regulations. The instruction that homosexuals are to be killed is considered to be a cultural mandate that was intended to keep people reproducing and multiplying. In addition the argument is used that no one takes the Levitical law seriously anymore. We eat unclean meat and allow the handicapped to serve in the church.

The explanation of the destruction of Sodom is farfetched. In particular since the context of Lot offering his daughters to the men gives a clear sexual connotation to the passage. The excuse that forbidding homosexuality was cultural in order to cause the Jewish nation to increase is totally imaginative. Even if it made sense, then being single would also be a crime since it also would slow down the growth of the nation. Also adultery and incest would be encouraged since they could be procreative. As far as the separation of the modern church from the ceremonial law of the Jews, this is a very weak argument for also leaving the moral law.

Perhaps the best argument in defense of homosexuality is that the New Testament teaches us to love. There is an element of truth here, since we are to love and forgive. Also Paul's teaching that we are no longer under the law but under grace seems to lend some support. The mistake here is making love and forgiveness equal to the encouraging of sin. Paul's teaching that we are no longer under the law (Romans 6:15) is speaking to us in view of redemption, for under the law none can be saved. Paul does not advocate the breaking of the law. He clearly teaches we are not to continue to sin, for then there is no forgiveness. We are not to be slave to sin (Romans 6:1, 2); Paul teaches we are to be slaves to righteousness and if we remain slaves to sin we will die (Romans 8:13).

To take the stand that homosexuality is not a sin condemned in both the Old and New Testament requires blind deductive reasoning since an honest exegesis of the related passages leaves no room for doubt. We need to show love to those trapped in sin, but Scripture does not teach situational ethics in regard to love, or the approval of what God has condemned as sin. The evangelical church cannot take a liberal view on homosexuality, and those who do take such a view should at least not pretend that their view is supported by Scripture. Those who call sin good make God out to be a liar, and their condemnation is just. Even so there is love, acceptance and forgiveness if they will repent from their sins. *Fred Peters, 4400 4th Ave., Regina, SK S4T 0H8*

Feb. 21

Editor's note: I'm sorry this discussion seems again to be growing on these pages. I understand Carl Epp's initial concern being the medical dimensions in the discussion. The responses to date have at least included that. Fred, here you seem to ignore that question. We have earlier gone rounds on our differences of biblical interpretation on this question. Do we want to play it over again now?

Stop useless argument

I can't understand why we have letters trying to justify a lifestyle such as homosexuality when we know that the Bible directly forbids it and that it has no place in the kingdom of God. It is a deliberate rejection of God's plan for the human race.

Satan does in a wicked and deceitful way inject in the mixed-up minds a way to make people believe that God does not mean what he says and that we can play a game with God and win. God has given us a free will and a conscience either to accept the truth and the authority of God's Word or we may meddle with it and seek to apply it to suit our own desires . . . where the worm dies not and the fire shall not be quenched. Let God be God and seek his divine will and save our souls. We may deny the truth of God's Word, but we cannot change it. We can and may tear out of the Bible in our possession that which we don't like or want to hear. We will not be able to touch the Bible God has in his hand. *God* says in his word we shall not lie or steal, etc, just as sure as he tells us we shall not commit homosexuality — a lifestyle God's Word forbids. It will be and is very hard to accept the total counsel of God's Word if we are not totally committed to God to keep his commands.

"If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land" (2 Chronicles 7:14). *Peter J. P. Schrag, 1917 Millers Lane, McPherson, KS 67460*

Feb. 21

Editor's note: For two years now readers' special donations have made it possible for us to give 100 free subscriptions to readers from overseas connections through GC missions. You have seen several letters by these readers. They are deeply grateful.

Once again these subscriptions are up for renewal at $12.50 (U.S.) or $13.50 (Canada). Are you interested to help continue these gifts to overseas readers? Please send donations to *The Mennonite, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114*, or *600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, MB R3P 0M4.* Thanks in advance.

MEDITATION

The man of Easter

This man — he walks among us now.
He speaks of kings and kingdoms
and turning swords to plows
He heals the sick, preaches in the synagogue
He knows Caesar is our king but continues anyhow.

What do you think this man is saying
What is he trying to prove to me
Can he break into the system
overthrow the tyranny?

This man — he's standing under Pilate's eye
Pilate says he knows no reason
why this humble man should die
Pilate's hands start to sweat, the crowd is getting loud
there were hallelujahs yesterday, but it's *crucify him* now

Why is he silent
Don't you think he sees
that everything he had is gone
it's time to pay the fee

This man — stretched across a frame of wood
you'd think he'd change this plan — if he really could
the noonday is getting dark, the great curtain is torn wide
"It is finished," someone says, he hangs his head to die

What has he told us
What does this really mean
"It is finished" is that all?
Nothing says the tree

This man — Escaping from the tomb
He's back proclaiming love and life
But says he's leaving very soon
I saw him on the road today.
Scarred hands and healing side
Speaking of a coming back — answering humanity's ancient cry

What do you think this man is saying
What has he done for you and me?
I have paid the price
from sin and sorrow set you free
What do you think this man is saying
What is he telling me?
Live the life that I have lived
Tell the others to come to me.

Tom Gaeddert

CONTENTS

Holy Easter. This issue features a wide range of articles: hope to cleanse our spirits, a focus on the adequacy of Calvary, a look at Golgotha today . . . treasures for Easter. But the resurrection challenges our whole lives. So we go on to our affluence, a lesson from nature, a triennial conference story, a local church's renewal, a missionary's first connections, the observations of foreign visitors among us. It is a full Easter package; we hope it also challenges us to walk as whole persons in the resurrection.

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EDITORIAL

It is well . . . Hallelujah!

Their hopes have been nailed to a cursed cross. Their dreams have been buried and sealed into a stone-cold tomb. Their security now lies in the bolted and locked doors, "because they (the disciples) were afraid of the Jewish authorities" (John 20:19). It is evening on that first Easter Sunday.

Crushed and scared.

Suddenly the air comes alive — the atmosphere becomes an electrifying, mystical, unmistakable, overwhelming presence. Jesus Christ comes in the midst of their pathetic and disturbed huddle (John 20:19-22).

Jesus says at once, "Peace be with you." In Aramaic the disciples heard, "There's nothing to fear; you're safe; all is well." In Hebrew, *shalom*. To all: It is well . . . Hallelujah! Don't be afraid. Ahead for you lies a new, abundant life. Satan — your greatest enemy — has been overcome. Take courage; be strong. I'm here — for you and with you.

He showed their pulsing, throbbing hearts his hands and his side. Yes, I was on the cross, but I live.

Joy began to overwhelm the disciples now — the joy of Holy Spirit surprise all believers come to at different times. In moments of greatest doubt and fear, Jesus comes among us and into us in unmistakable fashion.

Again Jesus says, "Peace be with you," and adds, "As the Father has sent me, even so I send you" (v. 21). Now he reassures the church established earlier (Matthew 16:13-20). He gives them purpose and the peace to pursue it. Jesus frees the disciples from their paralysis in the dark shadow of the cross at Calvary. He points them to the overcoming, enabling, sure, victorious life in the resurrection light. The church — yes, even though now huddled in fear and emptiness — it is okay . . . Hallelujah! Ahead for you lies the holy privilege of sharing my life and witness with all the world. It is from God. It is well . . . *shalom* to the church.

A third time Jesus speaks, "Receive the Holy Spirit." Be in his peace. It is well . . . in his shalom. You are okay . . . Hallelujah! He breathes power into their trembling lives. It is like pure oxygen for a runner collapsed in the heat of a race. Like clear, cool water to a weary traveler in the sun-soaked desert. Humanly it is impossible to be the church. The powerlessness of the cross is too intimidating. But the Holy Spirit turns "mission impossible" into "mission possible." (And in a few years that small Spirit-infused bunch impacted *all* of the then-known world.)

"This encounter and this greeting, 'Peace to you,' with all that went into it, were the most decisive beginning point for the church of Jesus Christ" (Dale Aukerman, *Darkening Valley*, p. 199).

Our Lord's first Easter word to the church was, "It is well." With that assurance he called them from fear to freedom, from despair to joy, from meaninglessness to an abundant wholeness of life, from a sense of nothingness to a whole actualization of God's will in their lives.

Easter 1983 there are people huddled under the debilitating fears of unemployment, cancer, marriages tearing apart, self-doubt and God-doubt, failing school grades, disappointment in a friend and in a brother or sister in Christ, the looming self-destructive impulses evident in world armaments leaders, the incapacity to dig out and get up from recurring bouts of depression, a sense of aloneness and that nobody else cares.

Our Lord's first Easter word is his Easter word today. It is a central biblical motif. The word "It is well . . . Hallelujah" came already to Joseph's guilt-laden brothers (Genesis 43:23), to King David in agony over his son Absalom (2 Samuel 18:28), to Gideon as he feared challenging the Baal worshipers (Judges 6:23), to Daniel as he trembled at being a bearer of God's revelations (Daniel 10:19).

It is well . . . Hallelujah! You and I can rejoice in the resurrection because Jesus died, lives and is with us. As he said to Peter at the church's inauguration, "the powers of death shall not prevail . . . I give you the keys of the kingdom . . . bind . . . loose. . ." (Matthew 16:18-19).

Nuclear destruction is serious, cancer can be excruciating, mistrust in a family becomes a gnawing pain. Jesus never denied such realities (Mark 10:29-31).

But Easter affirms for us the greatest of all realities, "It is well . . . Hallelujah" for you and for me — because of Jesus. *Bernie Wiebe*

THE MENNONITE

OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST

98:08 APRIL 12, 1983

Church planting: always a mystery

Leland Harder

"And he said, 'The kingdom of God is as if a man should scatter seed upon the ground, and should sleep and rise night and day, and the seed should sprout and grow, he knows not how' " (Mark 4:26-27).

Church planting is a more mysterious, indigenous process than the two words imply. The first thing they bring to mind is a church planter—a person who goes to start a church. As Paul wrote to the Corinthian fellowship, "I planted, Apollos watered." But then he added, "God gave the growth" (1 Corinthians 3:6). Paul figured prominently in all four of the apostolic models of church planting to be depicted, but in only two of the cases could it be said that the church was actually planted by him. They were happenings (see Roland Allen's *The Spontaneous Expansion of the Church*).

As church planting consultant for the Central District Conference, I made a tabulation of 15 fellowships started in our district since 1975. In only four of these fellowships were there seminary trained people with official commissions to start churches. The others sprouted up "we know not how." The Lafayette Mennonite Fellowship on the campus of Purdue University, for instance, has a covenant basis of membership. At the beginning of their covenant a brief paragraph reports: "Joyce Baumgartner, a Mennonite student, initiated a regular weekly (Bible) study group in the fall of 1978." When Bertha and I visited the group, there were six couples meeting

The idea of church was not a building nor a large assembly of people from the same town. It was an informal gathering of believers in a regularly constituted meeting.

several times a week for fellowship, worship, study and service. Part of the mystery of that experience was their unawareness, until we confirmed them as such, that they had really become, by the rule of Christ, the one, holy, apostolic church (to use the adjectives of the Nicene Creed).

In spite of this mysterious spontaneity, there are deductions that can be made about church planting in any age. One is the distinction between a church planting role and the role of apostleship. Paul planted the Corinthian church in a way that he did not plant the church in Philippi. Yet he had an apostolic mission at Philippi, and one of the Spirit gifts every fellowship needs is that of apostle—the person or persons whose mission it is to ground a given body of believers in the Word of God so that the channels of authority from the Lord of the church are clear and free-flowing.

Another is that the apostolic concept of the church is a more fluid, mobile, informal grouping than most sanctuary churches today. In his book *Paul's Idea of Community: The Early House Churches In their Historical Setting*, Robert Banks depicts this fluidity. The idea of church was not a building, nor a large assembly of people from the same town. It was an informal gathering of believers in a regularly constituted meeting. Except when he wrote to "the churches of Galatia" (Galatians 1:2), Paul was usually addressing a particular household of believers. There may have been other households as in Galatia, but they were not his immediate concern, unless he specifically referred to the "whole church" coming together (1 Corinthians 14:23)—apparently a joint meeting of several house churches. Banks observes a degree of mobility from one household meeting to another, e.g. from the church that met in the house of Stephanas (1 Corinthians 1:16, 16:15) to the church that met in the house of Chloe (1:11). Apparently Paul baptized several members of Chloe's house church, although he was writing primarily to the members of Stephanas' house church, whom he baptized. He got a little upset when another apostle (Apollos?) usurped his authority in the church that he planted (2 Corinthians 11:5), but he did not deny Apollos' right to attend his church and even to preach to that gathering; for if Paul had done the planting, Apollos was watering the plant, and God was giving the growth.

These books on church planting: (1) Bailey, *The Church Planter's Manual*; (2) Chaney, *Church Planting at the End of the Twentieth Century*; (3) Jones, *Strategies for New Churches*; (4) MacNair, *The Birth, Care, and Feeding of a Local Church*; (5) Hesselgrave, *Planting Churches Cross-Culturally*; (6) McGavran and Arn, *How to Grow a Church*; (7) Metz, *New Congregations*; (8) Redford, *Planting New Churches*; and (9) Moorhous, *Growing New Churches*; usually assume that there is only one right way to do it. Bailey argues for "mothering new churches." Redford has a nine-step procedure by which established churches sponsor new churches. MacNair has a three-phase plan by which an "organizing pastor" can help "seed families" to become a "mission church," ultimately forming it into a "particular (official) church" by the adoption of a constitution and bylaws. Hesselgrave refers to a "Pauline Cycle" for denominational church planting. Chaney presents a regional strategy for church planting, including a scientific formula for doing it.

I suspect Paul would have many reservations about the officious character of some of these modern approaches. His own approach to church planting was much more flexible and varied. In retrospect we can identify at least four models of church planting in which he was involved.

1. **The Antiochan model: outpost of Jerusalem.** In the development of the church at Antioch (Acts 11:19ff), we have what might be called the "mother church-daughter church" model of church planting. The tensions in Jerusalem scattered the believers, and Antioch was one of three places they went (v. 19). In character with the mother church, the first believers in Antioch were Jewish Christians who "spoke the Word to none except Jews" (v. 19). When additional believers from Cyprus and Cyrene began to witness to "Greeks also" (v. 20), the church in Jerusalem sent Barnabas to unify these factions and "exhort them all to be faithful" (v. 23). The mission of Barnabas was extended to a 12-month teaching ministry to a growing assemblage of people (v. 26). Needing assistance, Barnabas contacted Paul in Tarsus, a distance of 60

miles without the aid of direct dialing, and brought him to Antioch to help with the work (v. 25). Then certain prophets came down from Jerusalem to reinforce the ties with the mother church and to report an impending famine in Judea (v. 28). The daughter church responded by sending relief to its "elders" by the hands of Barnabas and Paul (v. 30). When they returned to Antioch, they brought John Mark along to help with the work (12:25).

In this mother church-daughter church model, there is a characteristic about a biological family that is magnified in the spiritual family: The offspring are always more than the sum of their parents. This is a warning to the McGavran school of church planting that stresses "homogenous units." All of the commentators on the Antiochan church remark about its cross-cultural character, and several hypothesize that the person who really transplanted the church in Antioch was not a Jew at all but a native Antiochan by the name of Nicholas, one of the seven deacons appointed at Jerusalem (6:5). Michael Green speculates, "He may have preferred to go back home to share Christ . . . than to remain shut up with the apostles in Jerusalem" (*Evangelism in the Early Church*, p. 114).

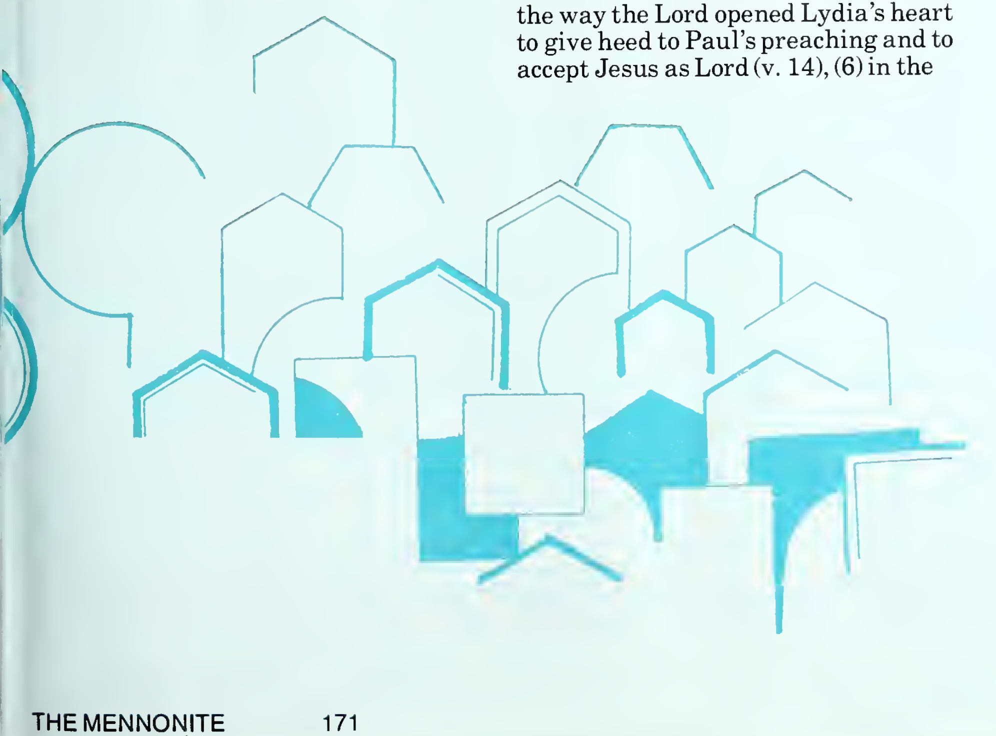
The disadvantages of this model stem from a kind of paternalism that prolongs dependency and fosters narrow ethnic identities that kill true evangelism. Luke tells of a contingent of Judaizers who came down from Jerusalem to insist that the Gentile believers be circumcised according to the custom of Moses (15:1ff.). Paul and Barnabas led a delegation to the mother church to appeal this issue to higher authority, and the result was the Jerusalem conference—a happy resolution of this issue and a wonderful encouragement to the church at Antioch.

The advantages of a parent-offspring model are this kind of ready counsel, support and encouragement. New fellowships often exist on the fringe of any viable connectional system. Daughter churches tend to be strong and fast-growing churches if the temptations of paternalism can be avoided. Antioch was probably the most influential and resourceful of the four models. It had the best staffed educational program for new members and for seekers. The preeminence of Jesus Christ as Lord was stressed here so explicitly that this is where the believers were first called "Christians" (i.e. the Jesus people). This is where radical mutual aid was practiced, a viable alternative to the community of goods abandoned by the mother church. And this was the first missionary-sending church of the apostolic period.

2. **The Philippian model: a Macedonian happening.** The chief mark of the Philippian church was the mysterious guidance of the Holy Spirit (1) in the way a small group of Jewish women were meeting regularly on the Sabbath at a designated "place of prayer" by a river outside the city (16:13), (2) in the way a man from Macedonia beckoned Paul in a vision one night, saying, "Come over to Macedonia and help us" (v. 9), (3) in the way Luke as he tells the story suddenly shifts from the third person plural "they" (v. 8), to the first person plural "we" (v. 10), suggesting that he may have been the man in Paul's dream, (4) in the way Luke shifts back to the third person "they" (17:1), when Paul and Silas and Timothy left Philippi for Thessalonica, suggesting that the church was left in charge of Luke, (5) in the way the Lord opened Lydia's heart to give heed to Paul's preaching and to accept Jesus as Lord (v. 14), (6) in the way Lydia's house became Paul's hostel and the meetingplace for the Philippian church (v. 15), (7) in the way a slave girl was exorcized by Paul and the missioners were imprisoned (vv. 16-24), (8) in the way the Philippian jailer was converted through the miracle of the earthquake that opened the prison doors and broke their chains that had fettered their feet (vv. 25-34) and (9) in the way, following their departure from Philippi, after a stay that could hardly have lasted more than a few weeks, the believers—Lydia, Euodia, Syntyche, Clement, Epaphroditus and the other unnamed "yokefellows"—sent their love and support and money and personnel to minister to Paul throughout the rest of his church planting career (Philippians 1-4).

Who planted the church in Philippi? Paul came as an apostle, grounding this group in the gospel of Christ, but the group had really gathered before he and Silas arrived. It seems likely that they sent for Paul, or the Holy Spirit guided Paul and Silas there to evangelize this group and confirm them in the faith. And of all the churches he helped to plant, this one was his favorite—his joy, his affection, his deepest partnership in the gospel.

We cannot really say who founded this church; it was spontaneous combustion. And as Greenway writes, "Most of the churches of the first century, and all succeeding centuries, were founded by Christians whose names were never recorded in history books. They received no acclaim, on earth at least, for their labors and sacrifices. . . . It was that way at Antioch (and Philippi). We do not know who began the church, but Christians for centuries have benefited from what he or she did" (*Apostles to the City: Biblical Strategies for Urban Missions*, p. 59).



3. **The Thessalonian model: intentional church planting.** In the Thessalonian model we have the more traditional method of an intentional mission sent in from an outside missionary church or agency. The story of the Thessalonian church begins in the earlier story of Antioch: "While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, 'Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them' " (Acts 13:2).

Thessalonica was the capital of Macedonia and a strategic city in which to plant a church. But where Philippi was a happening from the start, Thessalonica was a sequence of conflicts forcing Paul to flee the city after a few weeks, leaving the work in the hands of Silas and Timothy. Nevertheless, there is no doubt here, as there was in Philippi, who planted this church: "These men who have turned the world upside down have come here also. And Jason has received them, and they are acting against the decrees of Caesar, saying that there is another King, Jesus" (17:6-7). This was a confrontive, directive style of church planting. The key factor in this model was the trained, ordained, set-apart missioners who came into town and in three weeks turned it into an uproar. It reminds one of Jörg Blaurock's style of commandeering the pulpits of Zurich's suburban churches to preach Anabaptist doctrine in 1525. In Thessalonica the synagogue was immediately slammed shut on them, but not before they won the God-fearing proselytes Jason, Gaius, Secundus and Aristarchus. So the meetingplace was moved from the synagogue to the house of Jason. Paul's two letters to the Thessalonian fellowship point to a mission that had gone from the synagogue into the streets and neighborhoods, bringing in men and women who had never been touched by Judaism, perhaps converted right out of paganism.

There are strengths and weaknesses also to this more aggressive, intentional style of church planting. The polarization of the target population resulted in a church being planted in three weeks after arrival.

The weakness of this approach is the harsh struggle for survival and the kinds of moral and ethical problems that immediately arise when converts turn to Christ from idols. Paul's two letters reveal a desperate effort to exhort this fledgling church, exposed to the continuing attacks of hostile neighbors and bereft of leadership "to lead a life worthy of God, who has called you" (1 Thessalonians 2:12).

4. **The Corinthian-Ephesian model: "as you go" shared ministry.** In the pamphlet *As You Go*, John Howard Yoder comments on the Corinthian-Ephesian model of church planting as follows: "Throughout the history of God's people, the gospel has been brought to new parts of the world primarily by migration of financially independent Christians. In Acts the faith spread from Jerusalem to Samaria, from Samaria to Antioch, and from there to Cyprus before the churches at Jerusalem and Antioch gave any thought to organizing to propagate their message. Christians were dispersed, sometimes because of commercial or family interests, more often because of persecution. Where they went they took their faith with them, and new Christian cells were planted.

"Even the so-called 'missionary voyages' of the apostle Paul are no exception to this rule. Wherever Paul went, he began with the circle of faithful Jews and God-fearing Gentiles who gathered in the synagogue. Since Paul believed that the Christian church is a continuation of Israel, he was able to come to each of these synagogues as to a potential church, already planted in the city by the migration of God's people. . . .

"When the apostle Paul reached Corinth, paying his own way with his tentmaking trade, he went into partnership with another Jewish tentmaker, a refugee from Rome named Aquila. We are not told just when and how Aquila and Priscilla became Christians, but we do know that when Paul left Corinth for Jerusalem, they went along. We are not told that they moved to find a place where there was a greater demand for tents—this move may well have been the first step in their lives as Christian disciples. Paul left them behind when his boat stopped at Ephesus, and they were the ones who corrected the theology of the brilliant Apollos and introduced him to the church at Corinth" (pp. 12-13).

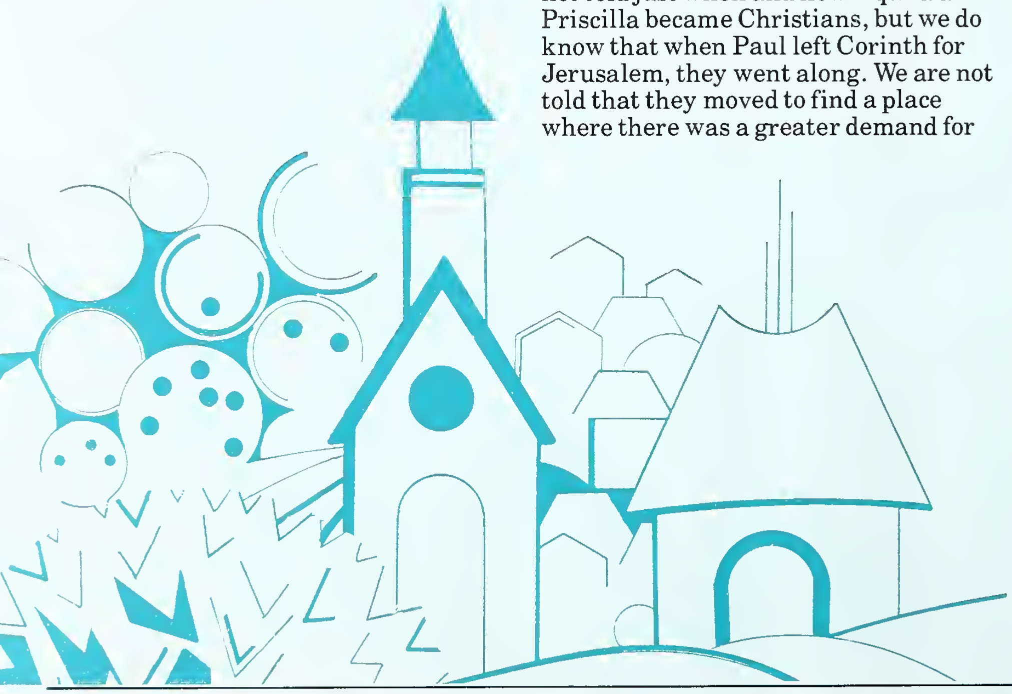
The Corinthian-Ephesian model is a combination of the best elements of the other three. There was an element of parent church-offspring church, insofar as the Ephesian church can be viewed as an extension of the church at Corinth through the church planting ministries of Paul, Priscilla and Aquila. There was an element of spontaneity as in Philippi, insofar as Paul was more informal and non-directive and trustful and forbearing here than at Thessalonica, giving time for the church to develop naturally over a period of several years. And there was an element of intentional church planting strategy involved here in keeping with the same sense of divine mandate to plant the church "as they went," as in Thessalonica, but with less prominence as authority figures and more of a shared ministry.

What was new in the Ephesian story was the experience in Corinth that a church planting covenant among several people can allocate the burdens of responsibility in a marvelous kind of partnership and team approach.

With these four models in the background, we can observe that the components of church planting are of two kinds: variables and constants. A variable is a factor or component that varies from case to case. A constant is a factor that is uniformly applicable and theologically universal and essential.

The variables of church planting have to do with type of meetingplace, location, name, property, paid leadership and the choice of model that is used in a given case. The constants have to do with Christ as Lord, the fellowship as his body, the gifts of the Holy Spirit for ministry, the mission to preach and teach the Word of God and the mutual convenant to observe the ordinances and to obey the commandments of the Lord.

But even as we apply these universals of church planting, and certainly as we discern the way to proceed on the variables, it is well to remind ourselves of our Lord's parable of the mystery of church planting. We scatter the seed upon the ground and then go to sleep and rise, day after day, to behold how the seed, by the grace of God, sprouts up and grows, *we know not how.* •



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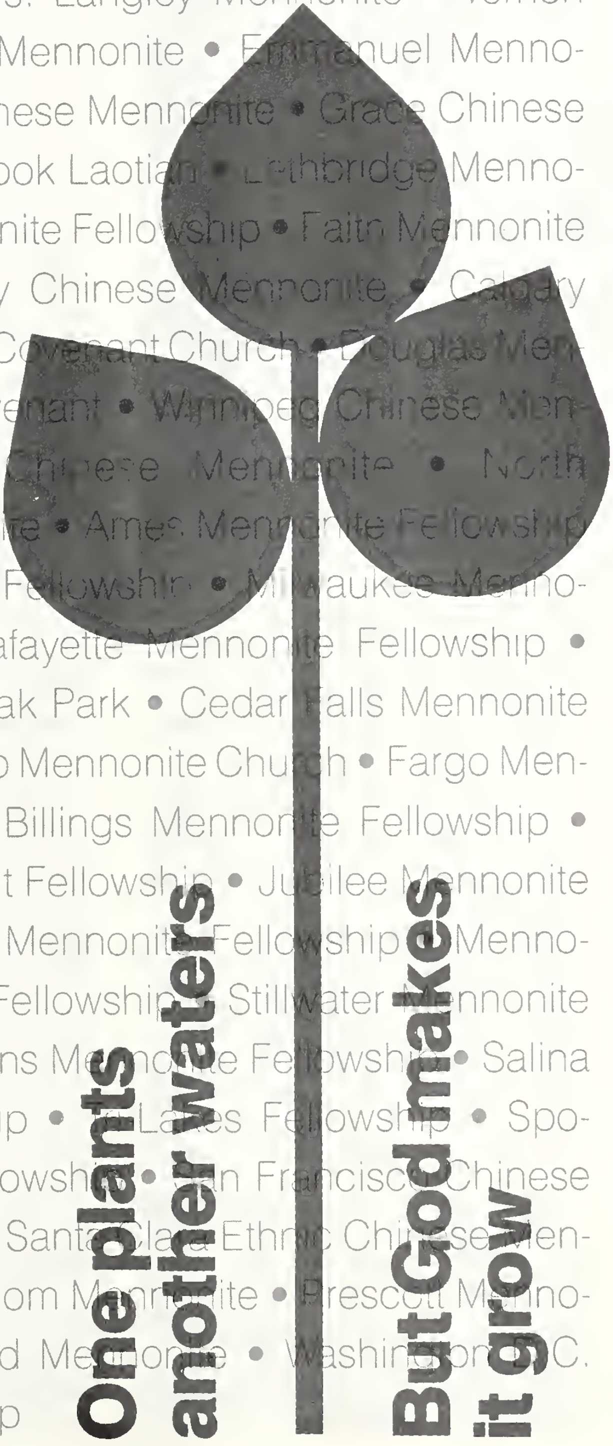
Churches exist to plant new churches

Paul W. Boschman

Forty-two New Church/Fellowships Have Been Planted in the Past Five Years: Langley Mennonite • Vernon Mennonite • Peace Mennonite • Emmanuel Mennonite • Vancouver Chinese Mennonite • Grace Chinese Mennonite • Clearbrook Laotian • Lethbridge Mennonite • Calgary Mennonite Fellowship • Faith Mennonite Edmonton • Calgary Chinese Mennonite • Calgary Laotian • Saskatoon Covenant Church • Douglas Mennonite • Winkler Covenant • Winnipeg Chinese Mennonite • Toronto Chinese Mennonite • North Leamington Mennonite • Ames Mennonite Fellowship • Harlan Mennonite Fellowship • Milwaukee Mennonite Fellowship • Lafayette Mennonite Fellowship • First Mennonite of Oak Park • Cedar Falls Mennonite Fellowship • Mankato Mennonite Church • Fargo Mennonite Fellowship • Billings Mennonite Fellowship • Sermon on the Mount Fellowship • Jubilee Mennonite Church • Lawrence Mennonite Fellowship • Mennonite Oklahoma City Fellowship • Stillwater Mennonite Fellowship • Ft. Collins Mennonite Fellowship • Salina Mennonite Fellowship • Tri-Lakes Fellowship • Spokane Mennonite Fellowship • San Francisco Chinese Mennonite Church • Santa Clara Ethnic Chinese Mennonite Church • Shalom Mennonite • Prescott Mennonite Church • United Mennonite • Washington D.C. Mennonite Fellowship



One person recently said to me, "Why should we plant a new church when we still have 45 empty seats every Sunday?" It is commonly believed that our communities are completely churched. The fact that we actually close a few GC churches each year gives further credence to this belief.

The truth is that thousands of new churches are needed in the United States and Canada, and many of these need to be planted by existing Mennonite churches. Therefore, planting new churches must become a concern for every Mennonite congregation.

The Bible assumes that Christians will plant new churches. The Acts of the Apostles tells of the early church growth from Jerusalem to cities in Europe. As Christians witnessed and evangelists preached the Good News, many local congregations of believers were established. Believers met in public places and in believers' homes (Acts 20:20). Daily the Lord *added* to their numbers (2:47; 5:14) and the number of disciples multiplied greatly (6:7). The New Testament norm was never division or subtraction but always addition and multiplication. That exciting generation following Pentecost did much church planting.

Some church leaders resist the suggestion that their congregation plant a daughter church because they are afraid to lose members. We used to dig small water holes alongside a larger pond on the homestead from which we would dip buckets of needed water for the kitchen. By the time we had carried a couple of buckets to the house and returned, that water level had again risen to its original level. So it is in the church that gives up members for a new church; the Lord replaces these people with others who are equally gifted. In the New Testament, evangelism seems never to have been divorced from the planting of new congregations, which in turn multiplies in additional new areas.

We should note that when a larger church today "hives off" a new congregation, it soon fills up again. However, the church that resists doing so remains comfortably full but will miss exciting opportunities to multiply disciples in a needy nearby population center.

The New Testament norm was never division or subtraction but always addition and multiplication.

Today we conceive of church planting as too directly related to church buildings. For the first three centuries real estate was of minimal importance in church planting. Early Christians did without church buildings. We limit church planting possibilities by stressing too much the immediate importance of brick and mortar.

A church planter in another denomination told me they would have to drastically slow down efforts in church planting because they were out of money. It seems they had not considered using homes and public buildings. Planting new congregations was the norm in the New Testament and it was done without budgets for church buildings.

The nature of the church is to reproduce. Hollis Green, an authority on church planting, contends that every church (congregation) contains the seed for planting new churches. God meant that every local congregation should somehow reproduce itself.

Recently I attended the dedication of a new facility for a newly formed congregation in British Columbia. There were an unusual number of mothers-to-be attending and participating in the celebration. These women are a beautiful symbol for growth in this new congregation. They symbolize the nature of the church.

Also recently, in Calgary, a group of interested church planters from two local Mennonite churches met to hammer out the following suggested purpose for a new congregation in South Calgary: "Our purpose is to be a Christian church, Mennonite in faith and practice, established as a General Conference Mennonite Church to (1) provide spiritual loving care and nurture of the congregation (body-life), (2) to promote the kingdom of God by sharing our faith with people in the community in ways that will help them find faith in Jesus Christ and fellowship in the church, (3) to provide an opportunity for Christians to use their spiritual gifts in caring service in areas of need, (4) to give birth to another congregation when the opportunity arises."

For this congregation it will not be a question as to *whether* they should mother another congregation but only a matter of *when*.

Since 1975, 27 Conference of Mennonites in Canada related churches have been planted in Canada, and 32 General Conference related churches in the United States have begun since 1977. In many spontaneous and planned ways, existing churches initiated new church starts. They allowed the seed to be planted in places of readiness and receptivity. Planting new congregations, like planning an increase in the family, is a God-given plan for keeping the church healthy and growing. That the Christian church exists today means existing churches have throughout history reproduced themselves. That is why they are still here.

There are also churches that died; some for legitimate reasons, others for not-so-good reasons. In the period 1975-1983 six General Conference related churches closed their doors in Canada, and since 1977 three didn't mature in the United States (of the 32 planted there).

We must keep on planting the seed of new churches; not to do so is to deny the nature of the church of Christ.

Church planting turns "maintenance" churches into "new life" bodies. Many congregations settle for maintenance of the saints. It has become comfortable just to see the institutional church run smoothly. Such congregations have lost sight of the truth that the cutting edge—the essence of the congregation—must be evangelism. When all energies are expended on self, that body ceases to be the church. The Bible says, "The field is the world." We often say with our actions, "the field is the church."

It has been clearly documented that more people will be converted and become members of a church when places of entry are multiplied by taking the church to the community. John Wimbler, a church growth consultant, says the average United States congregation has fewer than 200 members, and the average Sunday morning worship is 65. He observes that after 30 years most congregations do not grow at all. Tired people in tired churches will become newly alive if they become involved in the planting of new congregations.

In this age of mobility the average family moves once every four or five years. If strong attachments exist to their home congregation, church members will commute. But church commuters do not usually get involved in their own communities and therefore do not establish bridges of friendship and communication with those who might be ready to receive the gospel. Efforts should be made to commission commuting members to establish new fellowships of faith so that neighbors and friends have an opportunity to come to faith where they live.

In the life of the family no two events are as exciting as having children and grandchildren. Could this not also be said of churches (spiritual families)?

Churches have personalities, and by increasing the number of assemblies we increase the options. Planting new churches provides more options and more opportunities for untapped spiritual gifts to be used in evangelism. Planting new churches challenges older churches to renewal through evangelism.

Church planting is essential to your spiritual health. There are about 100 million people in the United States and Canada unrelated to any church. To existing Mennonite churches Jesus gives the call to be the base from which these lost people must be called to faith and discipleship. We are not overchurched. Just as the newest convert will be most enthusiastic about new faith, so the most recently planted church will become an attractive oasis for lost and searching people to find new life in Christ.

Any Mennonite congregation that will take seriously the opportunity to help plant another congregation will experience renewal and have the inner satisfaction of knowing that they as a congregation have become the base for carrying out the commission of Jesus to make more disciples.

We need a two-pronged emphasis to accomplish this task: (1) Existing churches must extend ministries—evangelistically speaking—so that local people are in fact won to Christ and incorporated into a strong mother church; (2) Every strong congregation should seek to extend itself by planting satellite congregations. There are many people threatened by large churches, who prefer a community church that feels more like a family.

If Mennonites cease to plant new churches, we will eventually die as a denomination.

All who become involved in the process of giving birth to and nurturing new churches will experience renewal themselves. They will also experience the tremendous satisfaction of taking part in the work of God in our world. Our future spiritual health as a people and God's mission to the world depend on multiplying new churches. •

The water of life flows freely

Ken Peterson

Some of my favorite art gallery scenes are the paintings of splashing seas. They remind me of the actual scenes and rouse my yearnings for the ocean.

Splashing Seas,
endless tides;
Spraying Shores
boundless wide;
Swelling Surfs,
thunderous roars;
Splashing Seas,
Spraying Shores.

"And the gathering together of the waters called he seas: and God saw that it was good" (Genesis 1:10b). On our special planet, Earth, is a very rare commodity—water. Seventy percent of the Earth is covered with water and yet in our entire solar system, Earth is the only planet containing anything comparable to our oceans of liquid water and the atmosphere in which water circulates to water the Earth for life of plants, animals and humanity.

Scientists theorize that the Earth was first a whirling ball of gas—intensely hot. As it gradually cooled, the gases began to liquify and the Earth became a molten mass. The materials of this mass eventually became sorted out in a definite pattern: the heaviest in the center, the least heavy forming the outer rim. So the central sphere is molten iron—still extremely hot—with an intermediate sphere of semiplastic basalt and a granite-hard outer crust.

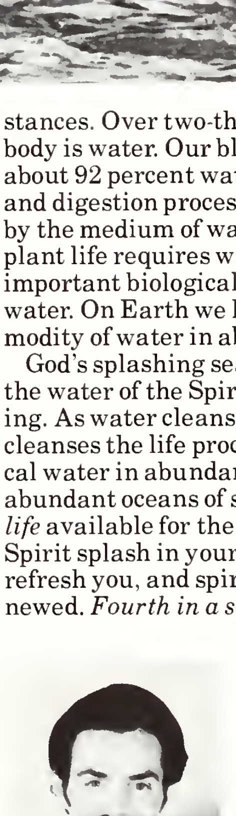
Our present atmosphere and waters came from the Earth itself through this process of sorting. Vast amounts of gas must have been exhaled from the semimolten surface while the primitive crust was forming. Surface waters were formed from the condensation of the exhaled gases. Intense volcanic activity continued to add gases and water vapor to the atmosphere. The water vapor became enormous cloud masses which blanketed the Earth. After years of falling rain the Earth cooled sufficiently to thin the clouds and form an ocean of water that covered the entire Earth about two miles deep. With further volcanic activity and shifting of the Earth's crust, land appeared and separated the land from the seas.

We are situated at just the right distance from our sun to provide for liquid oceans; thus the waters are neither frozen solid nor hot enough to completely vaporize. By a wonderful law of God, water is lifted by our sun with the right amount of vaporization of our oceans, minus the chemicals. Clouds pushed by the winds carry it toward the land destination. It rains (or snows) fresh water upon plants, beasts and humankind to sustain and cleanse life. Rivers and streams that dissect and supply all lands of the Earth, then drain the water back to the oceans, continue the endless cycle designed by the Master Engineer.

The splashing seas would continually wreck our harbors and submerge our coastal plains if our moon were larger or closer to us. If our moon were farther away and smaller, the tides would not be strong enough to cleanse our harbors or rejuvenate the waters of our oceans. The ocean breakers caused by the tides aerate the waters with oxygen to provide life in the seas. The tides are the result of the gravitational pull of the sun and moon, splashing the seas upon the shores in endless cleansing cycles.

Splashing seas are a vital key to life on planet Earth. Water is in many ways indispensable for life on Earth. It is the primary component of all living substances. Over two-thirds of the human body is water. Our blood is made up of about 92 percent water. All nutrition and digestion processes are carried out by the medium of water. The growth of plant life requires water. Practically all important biological processes involve water. On Earth we have the rare commodity of water in abundance.

God's splashing seas bring us life, and the water of the Spirit is also life bringing. As water cleanses the Earth and cleanses the life processes, so this physical water in abundance points to the abundant oceans of spiritual *water of life* available for the asking. Let the Spirit splash in your being, cleanse you, refresh you, and spiritual life will be renewed. *Fourth in a series on Genesis*



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Impressions from a new Mennonite

Dennis Webber

Being asked if I'll have to start dressing like the Quaker Oats man, being kidded by my father about converting the buttons on my clothes to hooks and eyes, being called an *Englisha*—a person of the world—by my future wife's Grandma Waldner, who wished her granddaughter would go out with a nice Hutterish Mennonite boy with a name like Hofer or Glanzer instead of with me, having to explain for the umpteenth time that Mennonites aren't a cult and that I don't live in a colony, all these and more are now part of the humorous side of how God gradually led me to become a Mennonite.

Ten years ago I didn't know what a Mennonite was. Now I am one, a pastor at that, mainly because of my wife Loretha's GC background in the Hutterthal Church near Carpenter, S.D. I'm in my first pastorate here at Bethlehem Church in Bloomfield, Mont.

Here are some first impressions from a new, non-ethnic Mennonite (I'm mostly Dutch and Welsh, as hybrid as Turkey Red wheat).

Areas of blessing. (1) *The warmth of the local church.* This may vary between churches and is true of many denominations, but the GC churches I have observed are extra open in their love and concern. Even before I officially became a Mennonite, my circle of friends had been broadened to include many from that background. We were helped financially with paying school bills, buying a car and receiving gifts for our first baby by people I hardly knew from Loretha's church. The outer signs of welcome (fresh meat and vegetables, love gifts, friendly advice and encouragement) since we've come to Bethlehem continue to show inner concern.

I have heard of many warm, loving GC Mennonite churches where Matthew 5:16 is lived out: "Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven."

2. *A commitment to missions.* The GC missionaries I have met have dispelled many of my questions concerning Mennonite missions. They have proved to be Bible-based, committed people, whether experimenting with agricultural methods in Paraguay, ministering with local churches in Taiwan, teaching school in Mexico or working with alcoholics among the Montana Cheyenne. I have not seen ethnic prejudices or a watered-down social gospel; I have seen people dedicated to Christ and his commission. I have seen 2 Corinthians 5:20 lived out: "Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were entreating through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God" (all Bible quotations are NASB).

3. *A ministry of service.* I could mention Mennonite Central Committee, Mennonite Voluntary Service, Women in Mission and others, but I'd like to focus on the interdenominational Mennonite Disaster Service. My home town is Custer, S.D., 40 miles south of Rapid City. The Mennonites' reputation for compassion and service is not disputed by any Black Hills resident familiar with MDS' work after the tragic flood of 1972. I had never associated mucking out basements with the gospel of Jesus before I heard of MDS. One of the best aspects of this work is the grass-roots involvement by men and women who don't have to have a degree in biblical sanitation practices to be able to put their faith into action. "And the King will answer and say to them, 'Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me' " (Matthew 25:40).

General
Conference
Mennonite
Church

4. *A great Christian heritage.* I'm probably prejudiced here as a former history teacher, but the Mennonites' tradition and struggle to worship God in their own biblical way deeply interests and challenges me. Being able to trace Loretha's family back to the 16th century, seeing her relatives' names on a century old ship list, playing the Mennonite Name Game by proxy; all point to strongly nurtured historical roots. I feel Mennonites never need to be ashamed of their name or their long pilgrimage in denominational history. There is a steadfastness—an anchor—in this heritage that many of us amalgamated, Heinz 57 United States and Canadian types long for.

Just don't pressure us "gentile" converts by saying or thinking, "Don't you have *any* German or Swiss relatives?" or "Is Webber a deviant spelling of Wiebe?" or—worst of all—"So you're not one of us." Mennonite heritage and bloodlines can go on slightly altered; witness the vast national Mennonite congregations of India and Zaire (who never had a Friesen for an ancestor). Let's respect your (our) heritage without flaunting it. "For I am mindful of the sincere faith within you, which first dwelt in your grandmother Lois, and your mother Eunice, and I am sure that it is in you as well" (2 Timothy 1:15).

5. *A Christ-centered biblical faith.* This undergirds and explains the other four points. I believe it is no accident that 1 Corinthians 3:11 is the Mennonite version of John 3:16. From Reformation days primary emphasis in Anabaptist churches has not been on creeds or liturgies or symbols but on the revealed Jesus of Scriptures. In preparing my doctrinal statement for graduation and ordination I repeatedly turned to "Mennonite Articles of Faith," an unofficial compilation by the 18th-century Anabaptist pastor Cornelius Ris (Faith and Life Press, Newton, Kan.). I was struck by two things in this volume: the massive use of Bible quotations and thoughts, and the centrality of

SPEAKING OUT

Jesus Christ in virtually every article.

I have seen this devotion to Scripture and the one it reveals in many current Mennonite pastors and lay people. Even in debates over interpretation and lifestyle I am relieved whenever I see a strong biblical base coupled with an intimate relationship with the Savior by those I may disagree with. We must continue to be people of the Word: Jesus the Living Word. "For no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (1 Corinthians 3:11).

Areas of concern. I must also share some points that disturb me about the General Conference Mennonite Church. I endeavor to do so in a spirit of humility; to include only positive points would be dishonest and flattering on my part—not good Mennonite virtues.

1. *An overemphasis on the peace issue.* I'm tempted to say I'd probably get shot in another denomination for questioning such a basic premise, but thankfully I'm safe among Mennonites. I've been profoundly influenced by the Anabaptist interpretation of Scripture concerning non-resistance and the way of peace. I'm not a total biblical pacifist, but my thinking has been changed much from 10 years ago. But I am often uneasy reading GC magazines and articles about peace issues. I have seen peacemaking substituted for evangelism; I have seen little tolerance for divergent views concerning practical applications of peace texts; and I have seen a tendency to jump on any peace bandwagon that comes along, whether it be secular, Marxist or Christian.

. . . many GC Mennonites from the Northern District and elsewhere often feel under-represented and threatened because of our conservative views in faith and politics.

Many times I have seen those like myself, with more conservative views concerning peacemaking, government authority, United States foreign and military policy, etc, ignored in favor of those who march against a nuclear weapons plant, who support those who don't register for the draft or who have more liberal political views. I'm not asking those with different views from mine on peace issues to cease and desist; I'm only asking that other equally biblically-based views on peacemaking not be snubbed or scoffed at. I personally believe peace issues are overstressed in some Mennonite circles at the expense of preaching/modeling/living the whole Word of God. "Preach the Word: be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with great patience and instruction . . . be sober in all things, endure hardships, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry" (2 Timothy 4:2, 5).

2. *An intolerance or disdain for divergent views.* I contemplated naming this section "a straying from the Foundation" but that would reveal my biblical theology and viewpoints perhaps too harshly. By divergent views I mean a more conservative Mennonite outlook: theologically, socially, politically. From various readings it would seem the average GC member was anti-dispensationalist, believed the church could bring in the kingdom of God through its own deeds, was open to unlimited women's ordination, was against any welfare cuts or defense build-up and was generally more comfortable being labeled moderate or liberal in theology and politics instead of conservative.

Again, I am not saying Mennonites can't or shouldn't believe these things. But many GC Mennonites from the Northern District and elsewhere do not hold these viewpoints—for a variety of reasons, including our interpretation of Scripture. We often feel under-represented and threatened because of our conservative views in faith and politics. I, an official card-carrying Mennonite for less than a year, sometimes feel myself to be closer to the biblical views of Menno Simons than some of my lifelong Anabaptist brothers and sisters. (Yes, I still consider them as brothers and sisters. I am trying hard not to use the same exclusiveness I believe has often been used against those from the conservative camp.)

In short, is an unconservative approach to the Bible and the issues of life in the United States becoming the loyalty test for Mennonite belief? I hope not, or I have dedicated myself to serving the wrong branch of Christ's Body, which I can't believe to be true. "You, however, continue in the things you have learned and became convinced of, knowing from whom you have learned them; and that from childhood you have known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Jesus Christ" (2 Timothy 3:14, 15).

Conclusion, I see far more good in the General Conference Mennonite Church than I see that disturbs me. Otherwise I wouldn't have joined a denomination where I had no previous contact or roots. In my short time with you so far I've learned to love this expression of Christ's Body, to love you and him enough to expose my innermost beliefs and observations to public view. I'm trying to give a fresh viewpoint to open fresh dialogue. The quality and depth of faith in Christ that I see in Bethlehem Church alone makes me "proud" to be a Mennonite, even if I am sometimes mistaken for the Quaker Oats man. •

The Mennonite Central Committee truck left Akron, Pa., March 2 loaded with 18 tons of potatoes, bouillon soup base and MCC canned beef. The truck stopped in 12 cities between Akron and North Newton, Kan., delivering food to church groups and organizations that operate soup kitchens and food pantries and help needy individuals.

Left to right, Griselda Shelly, MCC truck driver John Barkovsky and Tim Goertzen with food for relief at the MCC Central States warehouse in North Newton, Kan.

NEWS

Agencies support growing sanctuary movement

Newton, Kan.—Within the past two months, several Mennonite and Mennonite-related agencies and organizations have adopted statements calling on more congregations to consider becoming or supporting churches offering sanctuary to undocumented refugees, especially from Central America.

At its Council of Commissions meetings during the first weekend in March, the General Conference's Commission on Home Ministries adopted a resolution saying it would "endorse actions to provide sanctuary to our brothers and sisters in Latin America and the Caribbean."

Referring to several GC congregations which have assisted in aiding refugees in a variety of ways, the statement continued, "We resolve to support these efforts to act out their faith in God and deep commitment to those among us in need of shelter from siege and deportation to violence and terror."

Since the decision of Community Mennonite Church in Markham, Ill., late last year to support the sanctuary movement and eventually become a refuge itself, at least two other General Conference churches have also agreed to assist persons fleeing persecution in Central America.

Faith Mennonite Church in Minneapolis and the Hyattsville (Md.) Mennonite Church have both endorsed the human rights of Central American refugees and committed themselves to support other churches in their communities which offer sanctuary to such people. Individuals from a number of other GC congregations, such as Jubilee Mennonite Church in North Newton, Kan., and the Dallas Mennonite Fellowship, have become involved in sheltering or transporting refugees, although no formal decisions by their congregations have been made. A resolution on the issue is expected to come to the floor of the Central District Conference annual sessions at Pandora, Ohio, April 7-10.

Alberto Quintela, CHM's Hispanic ministries consultant, discusses the refugee problem.

On the same weekend that CHM was meeting, the Church of the Brethren General Board met in Elgin, Ill., and declared that sanctuary is "an appropriate Christian response to the injustice being suffered by Salvadoran and Guatemalan refugees." Although no CB congregations have officially become sanctuaries, a number of them are cooperating with other churches who have.

The Church of the Brethren General Board resolution calls on the U.S. State Department to stop deporting these refugees and to provide shelter for them. It endorses sanctuary and encourages congregations to consider prayerfully the action as a response, in faith, to the situation in Central America. However, the resolution also advises congregations to consider carefully the responsibilities and legal ramifications before undertaking such a move, and to work within the law as much as possible by petitioning Congress and the State Department to grant refugee status to Salvadorans and Guatemalans, thereby freeing them from the risk of deportation.

Mennonite Central Committee Peace Section, at its annual meeting in January, moved to "recommend to MCC and Mennonite and Brethren in Christ churches that they consider offering personal assistance or corporate sanctuary to (Central American) refugees . . . and that appropriate persons would communicate to government officials in an effort to address the policies that underlie the problem." MCC U.S. and MCC (Canada) have also been working together to help refugees not granted asylum by the United States to find resettlement in Canada, which allows a small number of Latin Americans to resettle there annually. *Larry Cornies*

The U.S. Department of Defense would like to amend the old "Doctor's Draft" codes by "striking out 'males' and inserting in place thereof 'persons.' " Among the "persons" are female doctors, nurses, physical therapists, pharmacists, podiatrists, veterinarians and "any other ancillary or technical" health-care worker between the ages of 18½ and 46. If all goes according to plan, the medical draft will be submitted to the Office of Management and Budget at the end of April and then to Congress as part of the defense legislative package. *Boston Globe*

The World Council of Churches "strongly deplores" the execution of six young men in Guatemala on March 3, and "condemns the false claims" of the Guatemalan government "that its actions are in defense of Christian faith." The statements are part of a telexed message from WCC general secretary Philip Potter to Guatemalan president Efrain Rios Montt, issued from Geneva March 4 at the request of the WCC's executive committee. The public message comes after an earlier, private telegram (sent Feb. 2) from Potter to the Guatemalan leader appealing for clemency. Pope John Paul II had also issued a plea for clemency.

Herald Press, Scottdale, Pa., recently gave Volunteers of Vacaville (Calif.), Inc., permission to record and duplicate the *More-With-Less Cookbook* on tape. Fred Ludwig, coordinator of the Vacaville organization, reports that these tapes will be used by the blind and visually handicapped who are unable to read conventionally printed material. Volunteers of Vacaville, Inc., is a volunteer service to the visually handicapped.

Toews assesses 'underlying injustices' in Central America

Akron, Pa. (MCC)—Reg Toews, executive secretary of Mennonite Central Committee, returned recently from a Central America trip which focused on the refugee situation and the relationship between MCC and the local Mennonite and Brethren in Christ churches there. He visited with church leaders and MCC workers in Nicaragua, El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala and Belize.

Central America has received more and more press coverage since the conflicts in the region have been increasingly viewed as a larger East-West issue. Toews observes, "There are some real underlying injustices at work in Central America that must be identified if there is to be a just solution. These injustices exist quite apart from any interest the various external powers may have in this region."

His first stop was in Nicaragua, where a Protestant church leader expressed his distress at "U.S. efforts to destabilize the government of Nicaragua." While expressing some concerns about the government, church workers said that the new government had provided an "improvement in the field of health and education," especially in the villages.

Displaced children in El Salvador

Some Nicaraguans, including Mennonites, are concerned about the long-range implications of the revolution. It was reported that the government is exercising increasing control of the lives of people. "The impression one got in Nicaragua was that of stability, but also of a revolution under severe pressure and becoming somewhat unraveled around the edges," Toews says.

By contrast, "the situation in El Salvador appears chaotic. One Salvadoran told us that the two biggest problems in the country were violence and corruption. Hunger and malnutrition are severe problems in the countryside, particularly in the conflictive areas," Toews reported.

The work of the local Beachy Amish church with whom MCC cooperates in providing relief for displaced persons in the countryside is encouraging. "I was impressed with the commitment to service demonstrated by the Beachy Amish church. We don't have to encourage a commitment to service; it is already there and we can build on it," Toews commented.

Three MCC workers in El Salvador work in two villages with housing, food production, health services and nutrition centers for peasants who have had to leave their homes due to fighting between opposition forces and the military.

Toews observed, "There is so much to do in El Salvador. We need to be generous and do more in this desperate situation."

"Coming from El Salvador to Guatemala, one has a sense of a government much more in control," Toews reported. By most reports the Guatemalan government has halted the opposition forces that were a serious threat to the military regime only a year ago. "With consistency we heard people say that the situation in Guatemala is better today than a year ago (at the time of the Rios Montt coup). We were told there are fewer massacres and killings. Where there is still strong disagreement is on how bad the situation continues to be. In the conflictive areas, killings are still going on with the Indians the primary target. While the army is apparently providing aid to displaced persons, it is still killing and causing forced resettlements," Toews says.

Toews also reported on a meeting he and MCC country representative Rich Sider had with leaders from the El Verbo Church, where President Rios Montt is an elder. The church carries out a relief effort which is closely identified with and reliant on the army. Toews reported that the church leaders appeared to be honestly searching for the biblical answer on the relationships between church and state.

MCC work in Honduras is closely related to the war in El Salvador, since it centers on two refugee camps located close to the Salvadoran-Honduran border. Toews reported that apparently the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the Honduran government are acknowledging that the 16,000 refugees will be in Honduras longer than anticipated, since the end to the conflict is not "just around the corner." There are suggestions that they be relocated on land where they will be able to become self-sufficient.

In reflecting on the many conflicts that plague the isthmus, Toews said, "As a church we are not called to take either side in the conflict. This is difficult because this will be frequently misunderstood and may appear to be impractical. But in Central America today we are called to stand by the poor, the refugees and the oppressed."

The church building of Faith Mennonite Church of Edmonton was dedicated Feb. 20 in a special service. The church had been meeting in a school building, then after a newspaper article about the congregation's need led to an offer of an old church building from the Alberta Housing Corporation, church members worked to make the building an attractive, functional facility.

"When we look at our future we must build on the past, for we cannot assume that what was the best method 20 years ago will continue to be the best method today," said Joan Barkman, secretary of Mennonite Disaster Service Section at its annual All Unit Meeting in Coaldale, Alta., Feb. 11-12. She went on to mention factors that will have an effect on how MDS can respond. The higher profile of women must be given serious consideration, she said. How we view time needs to be assessed because we tend to be so result-oriented. She further raised the question of availability of volunteers; fewer people are self-employed, unable to leave for short-term service.

Mennonite Central Committee's SELFHELP Crafts program is looking for people to work as SELFHELP Crafts sales representatives. A representative is a voluntary distributor of SELFHELP handicrafts in areas not now being served by MCC SELFHELP Crafts shops. They sell crafts from their homes, hold SELFHELP Crafts parties, display the crafts at churches and promote the program in other ways. People interested in becoming representatives should write Allan Sauder, 240 N. Reading Road, Ephrata, PA 17522, or phone 717/738-1101.

Leadership is theme at annual Alberta conference sessions

Calgary—Leadership was the theme of the 54th sessions of the Conference of Mennonites in Alberta held at Calgary Mennonite Fellowship March 11-12. The sessions culminated on Sunday with a missions festival for which Earl and Ruth Roth, missionaries from Zaire, were the guest speakers.

The hearty singing of the delegates added much to the meeting. However, it was the challenging and innovative reporting—interviews, use of an overhead projector, skits—that made the conference interesting and made for smooth, rational decisions in most areas. Henry Goerzen, chairman, was re-elected for a second three-year term.

The CMA has four major projects: Camp Valaqua, Water Valley; Alberta Home for the Aged, Coaldale; and the two schools, Rosthern (Sask.) Junior College and Swift Current (Sask.) Bible Institute, which they jointly operate with Saskatchewan.

This year Camp Valaqua required a major allotment of time at the conference. The new lodge and dining hall, although beautiful and functional, has acoustical problems, and the delegates approved the use of $2,000 to attempt a remedy. The director's office will be enlarged at a cost of $400. A recommendation for the developing of a toboggan run was tabled. A couple has offered to work in maintenance and kitchen on a voluntary basis for one year, but a residence will need to be supplied for them. This triggered an active though nonconclusive discussion about the options. The committee will give it further study.

A full camping program for the coming year was presented. Some programs are being discontinued and new ones are introduced, such as a camp for the severely handicapped. In the spiritual area, the director, Paul Koehler, attempts to use all teachable moments to expand mind and spirit as well as body.

The Alberta Home for the Aged currently has six vacancies, and it is apparent that the home is no longer as attractive as other newer facilities in the neighborhood. Although it has been home for the present residents for many years, its inadequacies, such as the stairs and few bathrooms, do not attract new people. Again the question arose about whether to upgrade, phase out or even find an alternative use for the building. A motion was approved to set up a study committee.

Rosthern Junior College, jointly supported by the Alberta and Saskatchewan conferences, reported on its ongoing program. With the size of the present graduating class, the student body will be greatly diminished, but it is hoped that an increased enrollment will compensate for this. Swift Current Bible Institute also reported a satisfactory year. They are enjoying their new building; the new dining room is not finished but is being used as a classroom. The old trailers (former boys' residence) have been sold.

Henry Koop (left) welcomes Anne and David Braun into the Alberta conference.

The missions and service committee also reported an active year. Work at the Blackfoot Reserve is moving slowly but surely. Three young people attended SCBI under the sponsorship of the Alberta Women in Mission. The Alberta Mennonite Youth Organization spent some time at Gleichen helping to remodel the church building and in fellowshipping with the native youth. Pastor Dick Raweater of the Blackfoot Evangelical Fellowship is struggling to proclaim the gospel.

The Chinese Mennonite Church in Calgary is showing healthy progress, but some concern was expressed regarding the Vietnamese Mennonite Church, which appears to be declining. The young church at Camrose is doing well. David Braun seems to be fitting well into his role both as conference pastor and youth worker. As part of the evening service on March 11, he was officially installed in those positions in a ceremony performed by Jake Fransen, chairman of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada. In his response, Braun spoke seriously yet somewhat whimsically of his expectations, and the assembly felt confident that he will be able to relate to adults as well as youth.

The education committee reported that they have sponsored the Sunday school teachers retreat, Project: Teach, a leadership seminar, are promoting *The Foundation Series* for Sunday schools and have a representative, Helen Braun, available to all churches. A Mennonite Marriage Encounter is being planned for November in Calgary. A promotional skit was presented by a couple who had attended a similar Marriage Encounter session recently. The education committe works closely with the camp director and the conference pastor and youth worker to coordinate programs such as retreats and the songfest.

"Who started the myth that building more weapons makes us secure? *He* didn't." The scene at right is from one of three TV spots to be released to North American TV stations in mid-April. The spots were developed as a group effort by Faith and Life Radio and Television (General Conference), Mennonite Board of Missions (Mennonite Church) and Church of the Brethren. Pastors of congregations will be able to order these spots free of charge and present them to local TV stations for airplay.

Within the next year over 96,000 Kampuchean school children will be the possessors of school kits made in North America. "We exceeded our goal of 86,000 kits," says Bert Lobe, Mennonite Central Committee's East Asia secretary. Children and adults in North America collected the contents of the kits—pencils, pens, rulers, erasers and composition books—placed them in drawstring bags and sent them to MCC collection centers for shipment. U.S. Lutherans and Canadian Baptists were also involved in the project.

Dan Klassen (right), camp committee member, interviews counselor-in-training Sheldon Krahn.

MCC gave an encouraging report on its M2 program. The response has been good, both from the correctional institutions and the people, in this ministry of reconciliation. Reports from Conference of Mennonites in Canada by Jake Fransen, Mennonite Biblical Seminary by Menno Epp, General Conference by Herta Funk, Mennonite Foundation by Blake Friesen, ministers and deacons by Ken Buller, Alberta Women in Mission by Erna Goerzen and Alberta Mennonite Youth Organization by Bonnie Hildebrant were informative.

After some cutbacks and shifting of priorities, a total budget of $253,037 was approved, an increase of about 3.4 percent over 1982. That amounts to $132.90 per member.

Interspersed with the reporting, were three inspirational messages by Abe Neufeld, Steinbach, Man., a former conference pastor. He expounded on the theme of leadership. Scripture does not supply a set pattern of leadership, but it gives guidelines, he said. The conference has gone through the varying stages from authoritative to shared leadership, and there are pitfalls in each. Neufeld shared some of the frustrations of a pastor or leader—expectations, traditions. He gave listeners a new awareness of the pastor/shepherd image in Scripture. In his last address he compared the conference to the first church council, mentioned in Acts 15:1-28.

Assistant director needed

Assistant director required for **YOU (Youth Orientation Units)** — MCC Alberta project. YOU is a residential farmwork program designed to meet the needs of young adult offenders, ages 16-20.

Farm is located 80 km. southwest of Edmonton. Successful candidate will report to director of program. Will assist in duties: supervise up to six volunteer staff, training of staff, cost control, communications with regulatory agencies and administration of adequate and fair discipline practices for up to 12 residents in the program.

Experience in supervision and in the trades is required. Must have ability to relate to delinquent youth. Appropriate degree would be an asset but not essential.

Apply in writing to:
George Friesen
257 Rhatigan Road West
Edmonton, AB T6R 1B2
Phone 403/438-6110.

Pastor needed

West Abbotsford Mennonite Church invites you to apply for the position of senior pastor of a 240-member congregation, as part of a two-man team.

This position is available immediately. We are, however, prepared to wait until the end of the year for a suitable candidate.

Please apply to:
Les Friesen
2475 Sugarpine St.
Clearbrook, BC V2T 3M7
Phone 604/849-2475.

North American Mennonite Youth Gathering

BETHLEHEM '83

- For youth from Mennonite and General Conference Mennonite churches.
- Scheduled for Aug. 1-7, 1983, at Lehigh University in Bethlehem.
- Registration will be limited to 2,000. Forms were mailed to congregations in February.
- Cost for this week-long event will be $156, plus transportation.

If you have questions/suggestions — write or phone:
Jo Bontrager
Bethlehem '83 Youth Gathering
Box 1245
Elkhart, IN 46515-1245
219/294-7536

Prepared by

Commission on Education
General Conference
Mennonite Church
Box 347, Newton, KS 67114

Two corrections concerning the Council of Commissions story in our last issue (March 29): The Mennonite Education Council being created by the Commission on Education will relate to schools and colleges in both Canada and the United States, not only in the latter. Meanwhile, the discussions between COE and Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., are not to create a Christian education "track" at the seminary, since such a track already exists within the M.Div. program. Instead the talks are aimed at exploring cooperation between MBS and COE in Christian education.

The Eastern District's annual pastor/spouse retreat was held Feb. 14-16 at the Spruce Lake Retreat Center near Canadensis, Pa. Erwin Rempel, Commission on Overseas Mission executive secretary, served as resource person. He gave an overview of mission work with the theme "People of Mission." Other features of the program were a get-acquainted time led by John and Barbara Bleam of the United Mennonite Church, Quakertown, Pa., and a worship, praise and communion service led by Paul Wikerd of Bethel Mennonite Church, Lancaster, Pa.

The second annual Junior Music Camp at Camp Friedenswald, Cassopolis, Mich., will be held June 27-July 1. Jim Heiks will again be the children's choir director and will lead some adult sessions. Earl Lehman will be the primary resource leader and director for the adults. A new focus this year is that the music camp will be for everyone interested in church music, not just choir directors. Children participating are to be in grades three through eight next year. If interested, contact Arlen Epp, Camp Friedenswald, 15406 Watercress Drive, Cassopolis, MI 49031, phone 616/476-2426, before June 1.

New congregations emerging in Houston and Tulsa

Houston—A new congregation that is ministering to Taiwanese and Mandarin Chinese-speaking people is being developed in the Houston area. Supported by the Western District's home mission committee and the Commission on Home Ministries of the General Conference, the new group is meeting in the facilities of the Houston Mennonite Church. Giving leadership to this new congregation is Peter Lin, a Mennonite pastor from Taichung, Taiwan.

The worship services of this new congregation were started in February after Lin found a number of people who were interested in being a part of a Mennonite church. The Houston Mennonite Church was pleased that they could assist this new church by making their building available at no cost. John Heyerly, pastor of the Houston Mennonite Church, had been working with Lin and reports that they are pleased to have a sister congregation.

Lin was born and grew up in Taiwan. He was a Buddhist before becoming a Christian under the ministry of missionary Peter Kehler. After attending Christ College and Taiwan Theological College in Taipei, Lin was ordained to the ministry in 1973. Together with his wife, Mei, he served the Ho-Peng Mennonite Church in Taichung. In 1977-78 he was in the United States studying at the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Ind.

Peter and Mei Lin have three children: Sara, Paul and Eva. They are making their home at 620 Nottingham Oaks Trail, #210, Houston, TX 77079.

Lin is hoping to develop a congregation that will minister to the needs of people. He wants them to develop leadership and be involved in mission along with the other churches of the General Conference.

Meanwhile a new Anabaptist-oriented church began worship services in Tulsa on Sunday, March 6, in an auditorium in the City of Faith Hospital. Giving leadership to this venture is John M. Miller, professor of missions in the School of Theology, Oral Roberts University, and Michael Kelly, a student there.

Twenty-eight people were present for the first meeting. In the afternoon another meeting was held with over 80 people present. There was a good representation from the Parkside Mennonite Brethren Church of Tulsa, and from the Eden Mennonite Church of Inola, Okla. Representing the Western District was Wilma McKee of Hydro, Okla., while Daryl Mast of Weatherford, Okla., represented the South Central Conference. They extended greetings on behalf of these groups. Six ministers were present from various congregations.

The new congregation will be meeting in the suburb of Jenks in the Senior Citizens Center, 109 East Main.

The vision for a church in Tulsa has been developing for over a year. In 1981, David Habegger, Western District church planter, met with people in the Eden Mennonite Church in Inola and talked about the possibility. More recently John M. Miller served as interim pastor of the Eden congregation and the vision began to form. Miller is a member of the Parkside Mennonite Brethren Church and served as chairman of their outreach committee. In January of this year Frank Keller, conference minister of the Western District, Nick King, a member of the church planning and development commission of the Kansas-Oklahoma District, and David Habegger met with Earl Cater, the newly installed pastor at Eden, John M. Miller and Mike Kelly. *David Habegger*

TOURMAGINATION TRICENTENNIAL TOUR OF EUROPE

1983 marks the 300th anniversary of the first permanent Mennonite settlement in the New World--Germantown, Pennsylvania.

TM invites you to celebrate the tricentennial with a 21-day tour. In addition to visiting seven countries (eight, if you count little Liechtenstein), the 1983 summer tour will focus on the 1683 migration with additional input, and will stop at places and monuments not featured on our routes before. Find out what caused our ancestors to undertake the long and hazardous journey on fragile, over-crowded sailing ships.

Join the hundreds of TM alumni who look back to their tour experiences with a renewed Anabaptist-Mennonite awareness, and with beautiful memories to enjoy forever.

TM 83 A. June 13--July 3, 1983
Leaders: Jan Gleysteen and
Wilmer Martin

For more information, write to:

TOUR-MAGINATION

1210 Loucks Avenue
Scottdale, PA 15683

131 Erb Street W.
Waterloo, Ontario N2L 1T7

Great Trek 2 is coming Aug. 22-25, 1984. On Feb. 4-5 in meetings in Winnipeg, Great Trek 2 chose its logo, Aug. 22-25, 1984, as the date, Lakehead University at Thunder Bay, Ont., as the place, the theme "Running the Race: Looking to Jesus" (Hebrews 12:1-2) and confirmed Peter J. Dyck (a popular resource person in the first Great Trek) as one of the plenary speakers. Hopes are to again set up a Great Trek train across Canada. After an attendance of over 500 in 1981, the 1984 target is 750 young people ages 16-20. Registration costs are $135, which includes food and lodging.

Great Trek 2
CANADIAN MENNONITE YOUTH ASSEMBLY
THUNDER BAY AUG. 1984

The 65th anniversary of First Mennonite Church of Chicago will be celebrated May 29. John and Mamie Burke have served the church for 10½ years. John, the pastor, is doing historical research about the church with the help of former pastors, including Leland Harder.

Helping the lame to walk in Upper Volta

Djibo, Upper Volta (MCC)—Victims of polio, a common childhood disease in Upper Volta, and amputees are given a chance to walk again at the Djibo Hospital here. The hospital was established 11 years ago by Ken and Jocelyn Elliot, medical missionaries from Australia, and is the only Christian hospital in a predominantly Moslem region inhabited by the Fulani cattle-herding tribe.

Mennonite Central Committee worker Carl Schmidt from Beatrice Neb., constructs and fits the artificial limbs and crutches for patients there. MCC nurses Hilda Schmidt and Dorothy Hunsberger from Spring City, Pa., work with physical therapy.

The Schmidts relate an experience with a 4-year-old polio victim, Adou Tall, who was brought in by his grandmothers. He entered the hospital without ever having walked. Dr. Elliott straightened his left leg under spinal anesthesia and applied a plaster cast. Then Carl made a brace for the other leg and a pair of crutches for the boy.

Voltaic nurses at the hospital began working with him, teaching him to walk. The process was discouraging since he showed little incentive on his own.

After the nurses almost gave up in despair, Hunsberger and Schmidt decided to concentrate on helping Adou. They soon discovered that he had never done anything for himself and was so weak that he was unable to hold an object in his hands. Several times daily he was scheduled for exercises to strengthen his arms and hands. He would often cry and say that he could not do the exercises required, but after two months he was able to move around his cot and walk by holding onto a bar.

When his cast was removed a month later and another brace made, he was able to walk with crutches. "He was so proud of himself, as we all were, and spent the rest of the day walking all over the place. His grandmother walked behind him for a short while, but she soon tired and decided he didn't need watching," Hilda Schmidt writes.

Hilda and Hunsberger are also involved in general hospital work, including training Voltaic staff nurses. They are also in charge of dispensing medicine to patients in the 90-bed hospital.

MCC meat and dried milk are given once a day to patients suffering from anemia or tuberculosis. Newborn infants receive MCC layettes, which are greatly appreciated by the new mothers.

Carl Schmidt has also supervised the maintenance and needed improvements for the hospital compound. He reports that a fence recently built around the compound has kept out the donkeys, cattle, sheep and goats that had earlier been a menace.

Carl Schmidt with one of the many patients which the hospital has been able to help.

Study guide being prepared for world conference

Strasbourg, France (MWC)—Mennonite congregations throughout the world are urged to join in studying the theme for the 1984 XI Assembly in Strasbourg. For this worldwide gathering, the 1981 MWC General Council has selected the conference theme "God's People Serve in Hope."

To ensure a more widespread and in-depth preparation, the program committee is currently completing an XI Assembly preparatory study guide. The book of 1 Peter has also been chosen by the committee as the biblical basis for the conference theme. Congregations are urged to read and study that book along with the study guide.

Responsible for the compilation of the study guide is an editorial committee consisting of Margrit Ramseier of Switzerland as editor, Hanspeter Jecker and Marie Noëlle Faure, also of Switzerland, and Paul Kraybill of Strasbourg. Further assistance in writing the lessons has been given by a European team comprised of Louise Nussbaumer, Pierre Sommer, Ruth Raab, Peter Uhlmann and Hans-Joachim Wienss.

Five lessons corresponding to the daily subthemes will be published within the booklet. Each section will provide various biblical texts, expository comments and relevant questions. Hopefully several original illustrations will also be included.

The study guide will be published in three languages, German, French and English. Master copies will be circulated to conferences and congregational education offices throughout the world. It is hoped that many of these agencies will arrange for translation and printing for widest possible use.

The material will be prepared in such a way that it can be reproduced from master copies suitable for photographic or offset reproduction.

Bluffton (Ohio) College's social work program has received accreditation from the Council on Social Work Education. The college applied for the accreditation in May 1981, and a site team visited campus in October 1982. Final approval came on Jan. 25. Bluffton has offered the social work major since 1944.

Mennonite Your Way Travel Directories are still available for 1983, the final year for Directory III. This directory, published in the spring of 1981, lists more than 2,000 North American households who have offered to host other Mennonites. In addition, the directory includes the names of 105 international contacts in 46 countries, descriptions of 25 Mennonite and Brethren communities, Ten Commandments for Travelers and a 10-day worship guide for traveling families. MYW Directory III is available at $6 each or two for $10. Order from Mennonite Your Way, Box 1525, Salunga, PA 17538.

Representatives of the General Conference's district and provincial education committees met on March 4 prior to Council of Commissions. Eastern District representative Ted Regier summarized the meeting for the Commission on Education, naming Sunday school training, resource materials, scholarship plans and librarian workshops as common concerns in the districts and provinces. Other items of discussion included traveling displays of resource materials, marriage and family ministries, resource person lists, music resource lists and conflict resolution.

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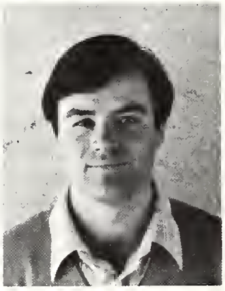
workers

C. Bjorkman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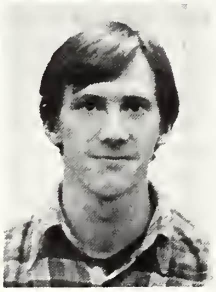
Emerick

Enns


Flickinger

Fountain

Carol and *Timothy Bjorkman*, Neu Hutterthal Church, Bridgewater, S.D., began one-year Mennonite Voluntary Service terms on Jan. 6 assisting senior citizens in St. Catharines, Ont. Both have law degrees from the USD School of Law in Vermillion, S.D. Carol is the daughter of Kenneth and Alice Ontjes of Bridgewater. Timothy is the son of John and Bernadine Bjorkman of Mason City, Iowa.

Bonnie Emerick, Community Church, Markham, Ill., began a two-year MVS term on March 16 in the areas of gardening, food preservation and building maintenance in Woodstock, Ill. A 1974 graduate of Clarion (Pa.) State College, she served previously in MVS at the Markham unit from 1978-80. She is the daughter of Elsie Emerick of Brookville Pa.

Paul Enns, Altona (Man.) Bergthaler Church, began a one-year MVS term on Nov. 20, 1982, in the area of health care at Consolidated Neighborhood Services in St. Louis. His parents are Nick and Trudy Enns of Altona.

Bruce and *Michelene Fast*, Garden Park Mennonite Brethren Church, Denver, and First Church, Moundridge, Kan., respectively, have begun a three-year term with MCC in Kinshasa, Zaire, where they will serve as administrative assistants. Bruce has served with MCC in Malawi as a teacher and in personnel services at Akron, Pa. Michelene has worked as a secretary for the General Conference offices in Newton, Kan., and in MCC personnel services in Akron. Their parents are Leslie and Viola Elizabeth Fast of Denver and Myron G. and Dorothy H. Stucky of Moundridge.

John Flickinger, First Church, Phoenix, Ariz., has begun a two-year voluntary service term with Mennonite Board of Missions, Elkhart, Ind., serving in San Francisco. He is the son of Calvin and Sidonnia Flickinger of Phoenix.

Katherine Fountain, First Baptist Church, Homer, N.Y., has begun a two-year voluntary service under the Commission on Overseas Mission and Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission in Zaire, working in public health. A graduate of Colgate University, Hamilton, N.Y., she left March 10. Her parents are Daniel and Miriam Fountain, Baptist missionaries in Zaire.

Carol and *Cornelius Froese*, Grace Church, Winkler, Man., have begun a three-year term with MCC in Bolivia, where he will work in agricultural technology, and she will provide support service. They previously served with MCC in Botswana. Their four children are Kerry, Erica, David and Reginald.

Erna Goertzen, Peace Church, Richmond, B.C., has begun a three-year term with MCC in Brazil, where she will work as a public health nurse. She is a graduate nurse from St. Boniface General Hospital School of Nursing in Winnipeg. Her parents are Bernard and Anna Goertzen of Richmond.

Steven Herendeen has been named manager of Mennonite Mutual Aid's life services department, beginning Dec. 1, 1982.

Mark Kind, First Denver Friends Church, began a two-year MVS term on Jan. 3 as director of the Broadway Assistance Center in Denver. A 1982 grad-

The Cedar Falls (Iowa) Mennonite Fellowship established a covenant of church membership on Jan. 23, following four months of study and reflection. Elements of the process included teachings and discussions about church membership, the centrality of the lordship of Jesus Christ, the concept of covenant as described in Scripture, and special studies in Matthew 18:15-20 and 1 John 4. Nine adults joined the Mennonite fellowship; four others joined as associate members. Twenty people, including children, shared in a fellowship meal following the Jan. 23 service. The fellowship has been relating to the General Conference through its Central District.

Patients in the Raleigh Kitkin Memorial Hospital in Manzini, Swaziland, receive MCC health kits.

A total of 9,000 Mennonite Central Committee health kits was shipped to eight countries in 1982. Another 7,000 kits have been requested for 1983. The health kits contain a toothbrush, toothpaste, soap, nail clipper and hand towel, all placed in a cloth drawstring bag. Last year kits were sent to Honduras, Haiti, Jamaica, Swaziland, Somalia, Zaire, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

RECORD

Froeses

Loepp

Medina

J. Phillips

Rempel

Goertzen

Kind

Neufeld

E. Phillips

Schultz

Todd

uate of Colorado State University, Fort Collins, he is the son of Reinhart and Joan Kind of Arvada, Colo.

Ingrid Loepp, First Church, Winnipeg, began an 18-month MVS term on Jan. 6 as a senior services worker in St. Catharines, Ont. A 1983 graduate of Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg, she is the daughter of Henry and Anita Loepp of Winnipeg.

Bill Medina, Tempe (Ariz.) Friends Meeting, began a two-year MVS term on Jan. 10 as coordinator of the Northwest Draft Counseling Center and community organizer in Portland, Ore. A 1982 graduate of Hiram (Ohio) College, he is the son of MaryAnn Medina of Takoma Park, Md.

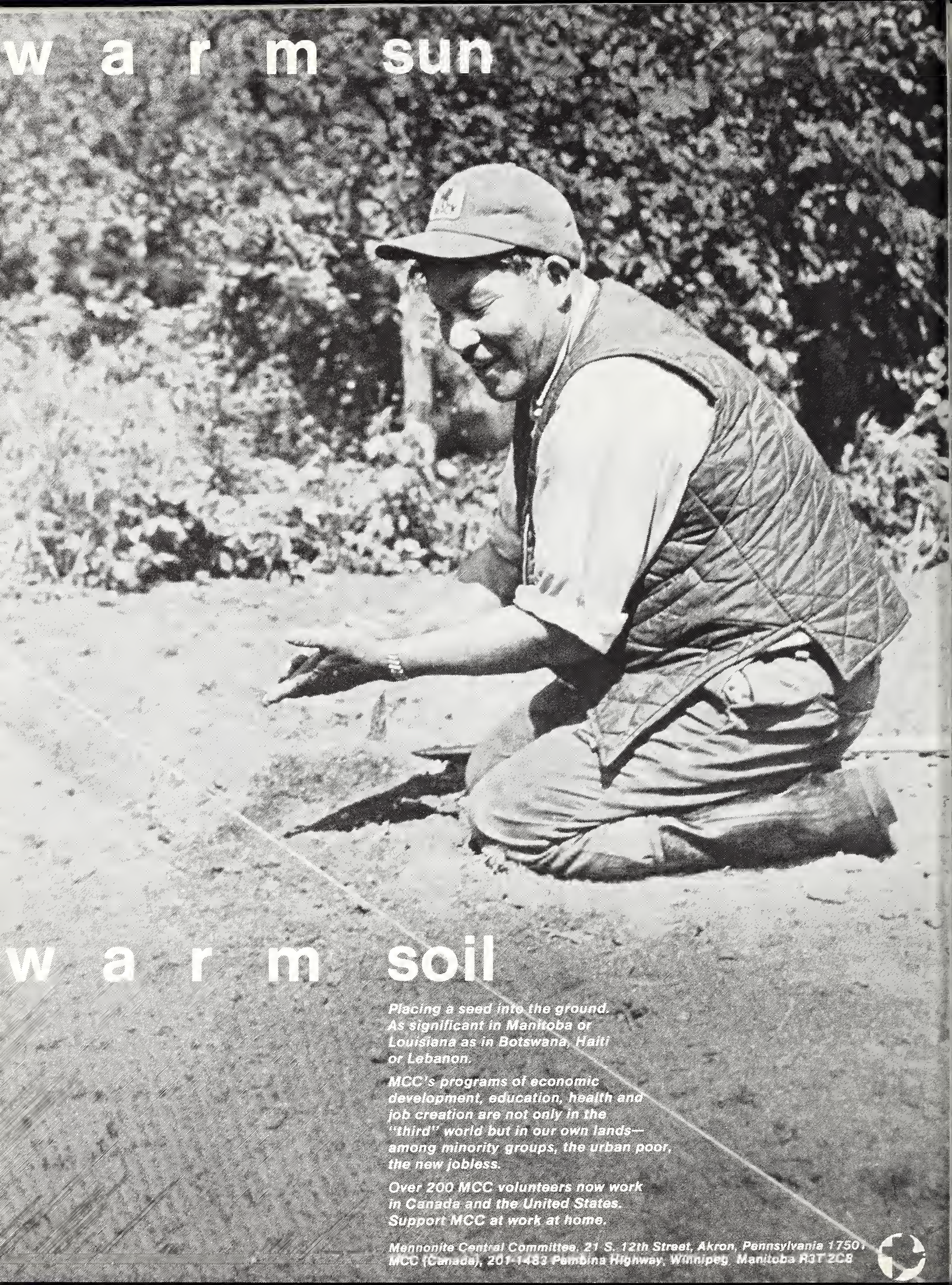
Jerry Neufeld, Eden Church, Moundridge, Kan., began an 18-month MVS term on Feb. 8 as a home repairer in Portland, Ore. A former student at Kansas State University, Manhattan, his parents are Walter and Freida Neufeld of Moundridge.

Earl and *Janet Phillips* began two-year MVS terms Oct. 29, 1982, as church and community workers in Hotevilla, Ariz. The Phillips have two children, Rebecca and Jeremy. A former music student at Palomar College, San Marcos, Calif., Janet is the daughter of W. C. and Winefred Hall of Oceanside, Calif., where she has served as music/choral director at St. Anne's Episcopal Church. A former student at Woodbury University in Los Angeles, Earl is the son of Claud and Billy Phillips of Oceanside.

Maxine Rempel, Cedar Valley Church, Mission, B.C., began a one-year MVS term on Feb. 26 as a child-care worker in Hutchinson, Kan. A 1982 high school graduate, she is the daughter of Jacob and Edna Rempel of Mission.

Joyce Schultz, Evangelical Mennonite Brethren Church, Mountain Lake, Minn., began a two-year MVS term Oct. 22, 1982, as a child-care worker in Liberal, Kan. A former student at Jackson Area Vocational Technical Institute, she is the daughter of Leonard and Ruth Schultz of Mountain Lake.

Keli Todd, First Alliance Church, Port Charlotte, Fla., began a two-year MVS term on Feb. 1 as a child-care worker in Hutchinson, Kan. A former student at Miami Christian College, her parents are Kell and June Todd of Harbor Heights, Fla.



Placing a seed into the ground. As significant in Manitoba or Louisiana as in Botswana, Haiti or Lebanon.

MCC's programs of economic development, education, health and job creation are not only in the "third" world but in our own lands—among minority groups, the urban poor, the new jobless.

Over 200 MCC volunteers now work in Canada and the United States. Support MCC at work at home.

Mennonite Central Committee, 21 S. 12th Street, Akron, Pennsylvania 17501
MCC (Canada), 201-1483 Pembina Highway, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3T 2C8

LETTERS

Thanks for alcohol article

John Dresher's article "This Drug Carries Its Own Evidence" (Feb. 15 issue) should wake up all church members who think that it is quite harmless and acceptable to have the occasional drink for special events.

I am for total abstinence. Like "he who never flies will never die in a plane crash," so "he who never drinks will never become alcoholic." In other words, "What I miss by not drinking is swallowed by the relief of what I escape." Thank you for such a revealing article. *Mary Friesen, Route 1, Box 52, Headingly, MB R0H 0J0*

March 4

Shares special meditation

This meditation is from a Nazarene Church pamphlet. I have permission to share it with readers of *The Mennonite.*

A lot is asked of a lowly seed
 aspiring to be a tree:
Will you give up all that you are
 for what you may someday be,
And fear no more the dark of earth
 to be buried with the dead,
And with your aim up in the sky
 dig down in the ground instead?

Hilda Harms, Friendly Acres Home, 200 S.W. 14th St., Newton, KS 67114

March 9

Detachment the better way

The editorial in the March 15 issue ("What About WCC and NCC?") caught my attention. Very little has been said about the controversy surrounding the *Reader's Digest* article and the "60 Minutes" TV program from Mennonite quarters, and understandably so. However, I'm happy for your comments as well as those of Daniel Hertzler in the Feb. 15 issue of *Gospel Herald.*

As a member of the Ecumenical Communications Commission of Northwest Ohio, I have listened to the frustrated responses by board members at the past few meetings. The constituency is essentially mainline Protestantism, with no evangelical body represented, and there are two Mennonite members. As I listened to their attack of the article and TV program, I felt non-involved in some respects. But the most intriguing element was that I didn't seem to fit into either the NCC/WCC or the National/World Association of Evangelicals.

It resonates with your comment, "Maybe our Anabaptist theology—which is at points uniquely different from mainline Protestantism and evangelical Protestantism—serves best by observing both groups, participating locally or regionally where such smaller groups feel comfortable to do so and retaining the right to be a spiritual challenge to both." That could certainly appear arrogant to the other two Christian bodies, but I would hope it would not be perceived that way.

I have appreciated my involvement ecumenically at various levels, but I appreciate the sense in which I have one foot in and the other one out. This "detachment" seems "the better way" in that it may enable us to be more committed to the global cause of Christ's kingdom without an attachment to the institutionalism. *Phil Ebersole, pastor, Bancroft Mennonite Church, 5559 W. Bancroft St., Toledo, OH 43615*

March 18

Art makes words unclear

I enjoy *The Mennonite* and have found it stimulating reading for several years now. The artwork contained in the magazine is fine, but when superimposed over the words of an article, reading the story is difficult and detracts from the article. Examples of this are page 122 and 144 of the March 15 issue. *Maurice D. Briggs, Box 821, Coulee City, WA 99115*

March 24

Editor needed

With magazine needs an editor by this summer. Three-fifths-time position. Experience desired.

Send resumes by May 1 to:
Paula Lehman
Box 370
Elkhart, IN 46515.

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Mennonite Foundation
Post Office Box 483, Goshen, IN 46526

We are church planters at Mankato, Minn.

Henry D. Penner

Many questions are asked about church planting by people of the Northern District as well as other areas. Questions commonly heard are, Are the new fellowships growing? Has your church reached a lot of new people? Did hosting the Northern District Conference in 1982 help you reach more people? Did it help you in any way?

These are good and legitimate questions, but they imply a commonly agreed upon goal, which is not always so. For this reason the answers are not always easy. Large numbers may not always spell success and small ones may not indicate defeat. Hosting the conference has not filled our pews yet; it has, however, made us better known in town, closer to the conference constituency and much more. So in order to evaluate the work we need to articulate our objectives. These may differ a great deal from one place to another.

When churches become willing to release some of their leadership families to plant churches in some of the most needy areas of our world, the church grows in both places.

Though our main objective at all times is to reach people for Jesus Christ, this may involve a variety of details. The church planters resource council expressed these something like this at a meeting last fall. We plant Anabaptist (hopefully inter-Mennonite) churches because (1) We believe our Anabaptist understanding of church is vital in the building of God's kingdom on earth. This would have several implications for believers in Jesus Christ following him. We have a heritage of faith which determines our life. (2) Our understanding of congregational polity. A worshiping community. (3) We believe that the community and world need a witness of peace evangelism in practice. God has asked his children to be peacemakers and thus witness for Christ. We hear people say today, "We know of your stand for peace; show us your Christ." (4) The church in Acts was people seeking to follow Jesus Christ as he revealed himself by the Holy Spirit ("It seems right to the Holy Spirit and to us"). Doing this in our life together and individually needs to be part of church planting. (5) The very nature of the church calls for growth and outreach. If we as Anabaptist churches want to exist, we must reach beyond ourselves. Sometimes we have called this home missions—which really is more inclusive—now church planting. We may have done a lot of this in foreign missions but need to flex our muscles on the home field.

Church planting seems slow and hard, but I'm convinced it's a vision that must be caught by the church at large. The church at Antioch put its hands on its best workers and sent them. When our churches are ready to say that they are willing to sacrifice themselves to get churches started, then church planting will be on the road. You as a larger or older church, are you willing to send three of your best families to go somewhere and establish themselves there to form the nucleus of a new church? Big companies transfer their good people for new ventures; why not the church?

Wait in hope

Reynold Siemens

When will this cease, this anguish of the heart,
This troubled heart that knows too much of pain?
These tears that flood the cheeks like autumn rain,
Again, again. Who can recall the start?
On black and silent trees perch ghostly birds;
Afraid they are to give a voice, a song.
They too must wonder why the night so long;
Afraid they are to speak their silver words.
But there is peace beyond this darkened night,
This night, long night, this tortured midnight's sigh
Which forms spectres that do the boldest fright
And moves the moon behind dark clouds to cry.
But there is peace beyond a golden gate
From which there streams eternal light. Wait, wait . . .

Evangelism Explosion

Donald E. Yoder

It was my privilege to participate in an Evangelism Explosion (EE) clinic—one of 22 participants from 12 denominations—Feb. 11-16 at the Church of the Redeemer, Mesa, Ariz.

The half-hour prayer fellowships each morning were a highlight in my group of four.

We began our learning by writing a personal testimony and gospel presentation that could be done in 30 minutes. Through the week we kept working on this to improve it for reaching out to other people.

Group leaders who took us on the street to share our faith door-to-door evidenced several special characteristics: (1) They were enthused and excited about sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ. (2) They naturally resorted to prayer for God's guidance. (3) They depended on the Holy Spirit. (4) They were determined to learn from each outing what new truths the Scripture as well as people could teach them.

Monday evening was our first attempt to apply the EE approach to witnessing. We were assigned to a new townhouse complex in Mesa. With a questionnaire to first "survey" people, we knocked on 14 doors. Twelve answered the questionnaire; 10 said "no" to our request for sharing the news of eternal life with them; two invited us in.

The first contact was a man from Hungary married to an American. They had recently moved to Mesa and were interested in our witness and in finding a church home. Since our leader was from the Church of the Redeemer, we made arrangements for another church couple to bring them to church the following Sunday.

Our last contact that evening was a young woman whose husband left the room as soon as we came in. She listened intently to our gospel presentation and eagerly responded after the commitment question, "Oh yes, I want eternal life so badly." We took time to explain what this means and we prayed with her. Arrangements were made to see her again the next week for follow-up.

Monday evening 22 such teams had gone out. Six professions of new faith were reported from their visits.

The experience of sharing God's Good News with other people will enrich both your own life and that of the one with whom you share It does not require a church setting but it does need prayer and the assurance of leading by the Holy Spirit.

By Wednesday evening the gospel had been presented 75 times to a total of 126 people. Of the total, 26 made professions of faith in Christ. A total of 473 people had been contacted.

In our own church—Koinonia Mennonite Fellowship of Tempe, Ariz.—five people had been trained earlier in EE. During my training I realized that I could have been a more helpful pastor to them if I had taken it with them. I now understand why EE urges pastors to be trained before getting their congregations involved in EE.

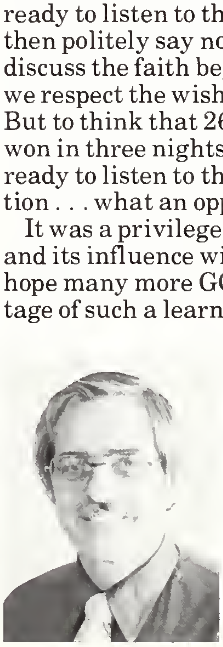
EE does influence the total congregation. The inspiration of seeing people accept Jesus Christ also renewed my own life. And the challenge to continue reaching out to others is enough to deepen one's trust in prayer and forces one to make growing commitments to the Holy Spirit.

As secretary for church planting and evangelism on a part-time basis in the General Conference, I hope and pray that we can enlarge the GC vision for witnessing to unbelievers. I am praying for the Holy Spirit's guidance to provide a leadership that will encourage congregations to become more involved. It does something special to those congregations who reach out to others.

I am convinced that EE and Friendship Evangelism (which has been promoted and approved in many areas of the conference) complement and supplement one another. Evangelism is always *more* than any technique. But methods can help us to become involved and then to see how our Mennonite faith needs to adapt them so that they can flow naturally from our own faith commitments.

Basically the EE groups found people ready to listen to the questionnaire and then politely say no if they don't want to discuss the faith beyond that. Of course, we respect the wishes of these people. But to think that 26 new believers were won in three nights and that 126 were ready to listen to the gospel presentation . . . what an opportunity.

It was a privilege for me to share in EE and its influence will stay in my life. I hope many more GCs will take advantage of such a learning opportunity.



Donald E. Yoder, 1920 E. Colgate Drive, Tempe, AZ 85283, is secretary for church planting and evangelism for the General Conference Mennonite Church through the Commission on Home Ministries.

My hopes for Bethlehem '83

Bethlehem '83 will truly be a unifying experience for all concerned. I am sure the feeling of oneness that prevailed in '81 when the Central District and the Illinois Conference (MC) met conjointly will also prevail at Bethlehem, strengthening the witness which we as a body of believers are called to proclaim.

Inasmuch as our biological roots have spread over the years through the nurture of many people of diverse cultures, all culminating in a spiritual tree of one people with one faith, it seems especially significant that Charles Christano will be speaking to the theme "Christ the Cornerstone." May the ripples that emanate from Bethlehem '83 reaffirm this to be the theme of our lives. *John W. Swartzendruver, Route 4, Bloomfield, IA 52537, livestock and grain farmer, member of the Pulaski Church*

Swartzendruver

McKee

Bethlehem '83 has at least three positive reasons why we can look forward to it with enthusiasm and hope. (1) Conference is always a time (for me at least) of spiritual renewal through interaction in many ways with the larger body of believers. (2) Because of the historical events being celebrated this year, we who are involved should be challenged and encouraged for the future. (3) Many Mennonites have had valued cooperation between MC and GC on the local level. This conference should deepen our love as it expands our common experience. *Wilma McKee, Box 32, Hydro, OK 73048, Hydro Elementary School teacher, member of the Bethel Church, Hydro*

It is my hope that Bethlehem '83, focusing on the theme "Christ the Cornerstone," will provide for and result in a deepening sense of our conferences' commonalities. However, it also raises some questions. Will the logistics of bringing two large groups together with a full, week-long schedule enhance the feeling of unity? If this is what it takes, how do we accomplish this with the other Mennonite conferences which will not be at Bethlehem? *Norma Wiens, 17 Circle Drive, Newton, KS 67114, secretary of the General Conference Mennonite Church*

My greatest hope for Bethlehem '83 is for an attitude of confession and repentance leading to a great outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Like at the first Pentecost, the Spirit would give us unity and power to teach and make disciples, and to be disciples in the difficult times ahead.

I am expecting to enjoy the fellowship of Christians from many backgrounds as we sing together, meet and talk together.

I am also hoping that many people will visit the city churches in Allentown, New York and Philadelphia. It would mean so much to us to have that kind of support and encouragement. *Ruth Hunsberger, 313 W. Indiana Ave., Philadelphia, PA 19133, Crossroads Community Center social worker, member of Second Church, Philadelphia, and Deep Run Church West*

I'm really excited about Bethlehem '83. My membership has been with either conference at various times, depending on our family's location, so I feel close to both churches. Often I have wished for more joint ventures and closer cooperation. Bethlehem '83 is both fulfillment of promise and promise of things to come.

This conference will also be a special experience for those of us who live in somewhat isolated districts, especially those attending small, widely scattered churches. To attend large gatherings of our brothers and sisters, to be a part of the church moving to confront issues, this makes us feel in the heartbeat of the Mennonite church. We experience a comradeship and vitality that encourages us for a long time. *Judy Dorsing Miller, Royal Star Route, Othello, WA 99344, elementary school teacher, summer "farmhand" and member of the Warden Church*

Miller

Kehler

My hope for Bethlehem '83 is that it will enhance and broaden MC-GC ties; that it will inspire and guide us as an international people of God to live faithfully in these unpredictable times; that it will help us to move forward in the processing of our current agenda, which includes such issues as sexuality, war taxes and other timely questions; that it will affirm our brothers and sisters in the Eastern District and strengthen their ties to the General Conference; and that all who attend, especially the young people, will be inspired in their love for and devotion to the universal church of Christ. *Larry Kehler, general secretary, Conference of Mennonites in Canada, 600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, MB R3P 0M4*

MEDITATION

When will it bloom?

I. He had a dream—
In Georgia's deserts
Sons of slaves
and sons of slaveowners would sit
at the table of brotherhood together,
Grafting Thoreau's century-old ideas—
—Gandhi's fasting
—Jesus' love
Believing hate and violence multiply
like weeds.
Walking with heads held high to keep
Montgomery buses empty—
Sitting quietly at Birmingham counters
waiting years for lunch.
Martin Luther King, the western bud of justice.
II. Sprouting out over India's decades
Satyagraha—
the love, truth—
"soul force"—
Fasting was their weapon
Spinning and weaving toward freedom.
Nourished by Thoreau's visit.
Father of India—
Gandhi of the east—
The stem of justice.
III. Unsung hero—Walden's Thoreau.
His visions
Hindu influenced
Zigzag across the waters
and waves of human thought
Bringing fruits of justice closer.
"Civil disobedience," he called it.
Roots in western soil.
IV. Back and forth—
across waters—
How many tomorrows—
how many zigzags—
Until—
—the flowering?

Lois Franz Bartel

CONTENTS

There have been 59 new General Conference and related churches begun in the United States and Canada since 1975. Some district and provincial conferences have been deeply affected. But there are still a majority of GC members who have not felt the new pulse of spiritual opportunity to plant new churches in our time without having to go overseas. Of course, oversees mission remains a major mandate of our conference. But this issue tries to help you catch some of the vibrations of God's Spirit for church growth and outreach wherever you are.

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EDITORIAL

Leadership and authority

When churches mature inwardly, they start moving outwardly. This has been exciting in our General Conference. We have been involved (many on an inter-Mennonite basis) with 59 new churches being born since 1975.

But, as Leland Harder, Paul Boschman and Donald Yoder tell us inside this issue, there are numerous variables in church planting. One that makes a big difference is leadership and authority. Too many among us assume that leadership and authority lie only in our pastors and other conference workers and therefore they are responsible for evangelism, church growth and church planting.

There is authority—even power—in ordination, election or constitutional appointment to any leadership position. The Bible recognizes shepherd leaders (John 10:3), special leadership gifts (Ephesians 4:11), that elders who "rule well" in preaching and teaching are worthy of "double honor" (1 Timothy 5:8).

Traditionally the church has spoken of *prophetic*, *priestly* and *kingly* roles of leadership. Interpreted biblically, they are probably still adequate. But there is a fresh understanding in today's best theological studies of the most essential ingredient in leadership and authority—servanthood.

Power, authority and leadership are unique among believers. It is not the eager, dynamic, charisma of people—even Christians—that is the most effective leadership. According to Matthew 25:44 many people will be terribly disappointed because they missed the essence of leadership. And Matthew 6:2, 5, 16 tell us that many get all the reward here that they're going to get because of their public reward-seeking. Self-righteous giving, praying and fasting have no eternal value. Judging will evoke only similar judgment (Matthew 7:1-5).

The apostle Paul recognized the essence of this truth, ". . . my power is made perfect in weakness . . . for when I am weak, then I am strong" (2 Corinthians 12:9-10). Christ's greatest triumph came in his powerlessness on the cross. In his vulnerability he saves us from our sins.

The scandal of the cross is that weakness (vulnerability, transparency, self-giving) is the ultimate authority. It seemed foolish to the Greeks then and to all Western minds today.

When did you see or hear a TV preacher/leader confess sin or open up to the way of the cross or the "lamb that was slain" (Revelation 4-5)? No wonder many spend half their time begging for money—hoping to exercise power. (I'm not suggesting all TV ministries are bad; I am saying we must also see them through the criteria of the Bible.)

To evangelize sinners, to plant new churches, to shepherd the flocks, to lead institutions, to teach, to be editors (What? Even us?), we must learn from the leadership and authority of Jesus. James and John did not see this even though they walked and worked with Jesus (Mark 10:35-40). Jesus had to tell them plainly, ". . . those who are supposed to rule over the Gentiles lord it over . . . exercise . . . authority . . . *But it shall not be so among you* . . . great among you must be your servant . . . first among you must be slave of all . . . Son of Man came . . . to serve, and to give his life . . ." (Mark 10:42-45).

Many leaders find this extremely difficult. We want to command and lead and exorcize; after all, those are the accepted images of power and authority among us. It feels like a cop-out to become self-giving servants.

If our leadership lacks authority and power, this is due to the servant model only if we declare Jesus' model ineffective or if we fail to follow it. His self-giving servant leadership is the only sure foundation for our faith and for the church.

The Jesus model does not excuse poor leadership. It is the most life-and-world-changing leadership ever demonstrated. You and I will experience more authority and power in direct proportion to our appreciation of his style. In our servant leadership he will make us strong and his sufficient grace will affect lives for eternity.

This privilege of leadership and authority applies to all believers (1 Peter 2:9) even though there are also special leaders. You and I will see new believers born and older churches plant new churches as we personally accept Jesus' leadership model. *Bernie Wiebe*

Reports and nominations for BETHLEHEM '83

Seminary issue

APR 25 '83

THE MENNONITE

OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST

98:09 APRIL 26, 1983

Ross T. Bender prepared to teach Christian education at Goshen Seminary but took a detour of being AMBS dean for 15 years (1964-1979).

AMBS is not an ordinary seminary

Ross T. Bender

A funny thing happened on my way to the classroom. I had gone to graduate school to prepare for a teaching assignment—Christian education—at Goshen College Biblical Seminary. When I arrived in Goshen in the summer of 1962, I was asked to be assistant to Dean Harold S. Bender in order to release his time to write a history of the Mennonites in America. God had other priorities for him and called him home in September just after the opening of the school year. The following year I was invited to become the dean of the Goshen seminary as well as of the Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart. Dean S. F. Pannabecker had been trying to retire for several years. It was only in 1980 that I made it all the way to the classroom as a full-time teacher.

It was never clear to me (nor to anyone else) whether I was the shared dean, the joint dean, the academic dean or the administrative dean. Nor was it clear how I could manage two offices and administer two academic programs on campuses separated by 11 miles. A telephone hot line between the offices helped to bridge the gap.

At the outset of cooperation in 1958, only a few upper-level electives were offered on a joint basis. Goshen students traveled to Elkhart for these classes; two rooms were owned by the Goshen seminary on the Elkhart campus—one for the students and one for the faculty. Each year a few additional courses were added to the joint program and some additional joint student activities were initiated. Eventually the Goshen students spent two days each week at Elkhart. Then the Elkhart faculty proposed that a third day of joint classes be held at Goshen.

The first mention of a single campus appeared in the minutes of the joint coordinating committee (representatives of the respective boards of trustees/overseers) on Oct. 2, 1965. Toward the end of the decade, each campus was standing empty about half the time.

"This isn't just another seminary; it has a distinctive character."

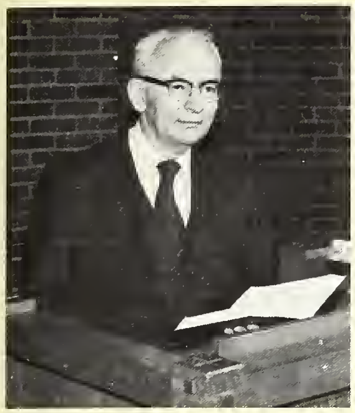
During the 1968-69 school year, exactly a decade after the initiation of the cooperative program, all classes in both schools were offered on a conjoint basis.

In 1967 the Mennonite Board of Education set up a long-range planning committee to consider patterns of governance for GCBS as well as the possibility of relocating it on the Elkhart campus. By the fall of 1969, the Goshen students and faculty had moved to their new home in Elkhart and the two "Goshen" rooms in which they had huddled together became shared space along with all the rest of the campus, which now was equally owned by both schools. The name of Goshen College Biblical Seminary was changed to Goshen Biblical Seminary (GBS) in order to maintain its identity with the Goshen heritage and tradition.

New administrative structures and procedures were set up to operate a single program on a common campus. For all practical purposes, the seminary community of students, faculty and administrators operated as a unifed entity. However, each school retained its distinctive identity and its lines of relationship and accountability to the sponsoring churches through its president and board.

The unification of the program did not happen overnight nor without much preparation. The curricula of the two schools, while similar, were not identical. There were many consultations along the way on various aspects of the program, including such matters as renewal and curriculum, the role and education of the Christian minister, clinical pastoral education, the shape of missionary training, urban training and the like.

More fundamental than unifying the curriculum, however, was the necessity to develop a consensus on those theological and educational convictions which constitute the underlying foundation of the program in all its aspects. This was the task of a two-year study project (1966-68) to develop a model for theological education in the free church tradition. This study continues to influence the way in which the AMBS faculty carries out its task and to create a climate of ferment in which ongoing changes are being made up to the present. It was with considerable satisfaction that we received the comments of the accreditation visiting team in February 1979, which concluded its oral report by saying, "This isn't just another seminary; it has a distinctive character." •



Erland Waltner served as president of MBS 1958-1978 and has been with AMBS through all of its 25 years.

AMBS is a Holy Spirit work of 25 years

Erland Waltner

In a sparsely filled Kansas auditorium a lecturer-preacher one evening in the early 1950s mused that it might be time for a new effort in inter-Mennonite theological education. Previous efforts—sooner or later—had all failed, but the vision had not died.

Mennonite Biblical Seminary was then located in Chicago, cooperating with Bethany Biblical Seminary since 1945, and Goshen College Biblical Seminary (GCBS) was located at Goshen, Ind. There were more than 150 geographical miles between them.

The idea of interseminary cooperation kept me awake for a while, especially since I had spent a 1949 MCC-sponsored summer in Europe, teamed up with Harold S. Bender (Mennonite Church) and C. J. Rempel (Mennonite Brethren). I was delighted to be able to participate in 1954 in a joint summer session of MBS and GCBS at Goshen. It seemed to go well. Shortly after these sessions I wrote a letter to Harold S. Bender and to Orie O. Miller asking whether we might indeed be at a new point in possibilities for interseminary cooperation.

By fall of that year a series of "exploratory meetings" began to consider the "feasibility and desirability" of a joint venture in theological education. I was then a member of the board of trustees of Mennonite Biblical Seminary but also a candidate for staff appointment. (The story of these exploratory meetings and their outcome is well told by S. F. Pannabecker in *Ventures of Faith: The Story of Mennonite Biblical Seminary*, 1975.)

The explorations were precarious and complicated. Sometimes they nearly died; but they were kept alive by a slender hope and the persistent efforts of a few students in each of the Mennonite seminaries and a few other visionaries. The General Conference Mennonite Church "fear of domination" by a larger Mennonite group was paralleled by a "fear of contamination" on the part of the Mennonite Church. H. S. Bender's invitation to MBS to move to Goshen proved unacceptable. The proposal that GCBS move to Chicago was dismissed as impossible. What had appeared as a dream seemed to be turning into a nightmare.

Some fifth-decade Mennonite "shuttle-diplomacy" turned up a proposal that Elkhart be considered as a possible neutral location for the seminaries. Just how neutral it might be was soon a matter of hot debate in some circles, but this did look like the beginning for movement out of an impasse. After a great deal of testing and discussion in both Mennonite Church and General Conference Mennonite Church constituencies, the concept of the "Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries" emerged and was inscribed into a Memorandum of Agreement eventually signed by the official representatives of the negotiating schools.

By 1958 Mennonite Biblical Seminary had relocated from Chicago to the newly constructed and quite modest Elkhart campus located at 3003 Benham Avenue, while GCBS remained at Goshen College. The agreement was that for a time at least this two-campus operation would prevail. A large tent was set up on the Elkhart campus for the dedication of the new facilities with Walter Roberts, then president of the American Association of Theological Schools, and C. N. Hostetter, Jr., president of Mennonite Central Committee, as two featured speakers.

"What does *associated* really mean?" was the question often asked tauntingly in those days. With 11 miles between the two campuses, with joint classes held only two afternoons each week (in non-threatening areas), with minimal student and faculty interaction (not even in chapel), this was far from close association.

When GCBS then proceeded to build its own seminary complex on the Goshen College campus, the AMBS concept again seemed to have lost its integrity.

Was it dogged persistence on the part of a few, persevering prayer on the part of many or God's own overruling hand that kept the dream from dying? When H. S. Bender, a central force in the association, died of cancer in 1962 only four years after the beginnings of functional cooperation, it seemed again that the prophets of doom had been right. Was it indeed a "million-dollar mistake" as some wanted to call it?

It was out of such precarious beginnings, out of such primitive pioneering and such unwillingness to let a dream die that a significant cooperative effort in theological education has emerged which has interested more than the supporting constituences. Now we may celebrate 25 years of the continuing operation and service of AMBS with a significant impact not only among Mennonites but on many other friends of the Anabaptist vision.

Through this quarter century we have all learned that cooperation—whether in theological education or in any other area of service—does not come easily. It involves the integrity of the good faith in all negotiating partners. It calls for openness to new possibilities and a willingness to re-examine old assumptions. It requires some readiness to take initiative, to take risks. It calls for mutual respect at every level, for a spirit of mutual servanthood and sacrifice, and for dedication to a larger good rather than the advantage of either partner. In short, it calls for obedience to God who sent Jesus in order that we might understand our oneness with God and with each other in the community of faith and discipleship. It is nothing less than a gift of God and a work of the Holy Spirit among us. •

Marlin E. Miller, president of GBS and professor of theology at AMBS

Let's look for surprises and challenges

Marlin E. Miller

The future of the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries depends partly on conserving and adapting the best of the past. This means maintaining the commitment to be *biblical* seminaries. The name "Biblical Seminaries," almost unique among U.S. and Canadian seminaries, constantly reminds us of this commitment. Language requirements and firsthand study of the biblical texts reinforce this commitment. Confronting all theoretical and practical issues with scriptural perspectives implement this commitment.

Conserving and adapting the best of the past means cultivating several additional emphases. AMBS brings together several Mennonite historical traditions. Learning from those traditions and interpreting their relevance for the church's contemporary ministry and mission constitute one such emphasis. Biblical and Mennonite perspectives have also implied giving particular attention to Christian ethics. The truth is not only something to believe, but also a way of life to practice. Further, preparing men and women for church ministry and mission has also meant educating people for various ministries according to their particular calling and the needs of the churches.

AMBS has emphasized the *context* as well as the content of seminary education. This means being a Christian community of teaching and learning, not simply a place to purchase courses. It means experiential learning and training by supervision in ministry settings as well as education in the classroom and serious study in the library.

But the future of the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries also depends on creative and appropriate responses to current challenges. I shall mention only three as important examples, one more extensively and two more briefly.

1. **Conference-based theological education.** During the last few years Mennonite seminaries and conferences have cooperated in developing conference-based theological education. These programs make pastoral and theological education accessible to people already exercising leadership ministries. They enable people considering pastoral or theological training to begin their preparation before moving to a seminary campus. They use teachers from the seminaries as well as others who are available in the area. Such programs are functioning well in Pennsylvania in the Mennonite Church and in Ontario and Kansas on an inter-Mennonite basis.

This kind of seminary and conference cooperation will hopefully strengthen pastoral and church leadership education in the coming decades. Instead of three such locations we may one day see 10 conference-based and inter-Mennonite theological education centers in North America. Such centers would offer courses in Bible, history, theology, church ministries and supervised practical experience. Some students may come with high school, some with college education. Some students may come without any experience in church ministry, others may have pastored a congregation for 20 years. Many would prepare for church ministries in both the conference-based as well as seminary campus programs. A broader range of leadership training needs could be met for both pastors and congregational elders, for both teachers and counselors,

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Biblical and Mennonite perspectives have also implied giving particular attention to Christian ethics. The truth is not only something to believe, but also a way of life to practice.

and for other church ministries.

2. **Congregational leadership.** Appropriate patterns of congregational leadership ministries constitute a second major challenge. Part of the challenge arises in the context of U.S. and Canadian culture, which simultaneously calls for "strong leaders" and roundly criticizes the "authorities." Part of the challenge arises from the New Testament vision of shared ministry which reflects the "fullness of Christ." Meeting these challenges includes developing models of shared leadership and providing the kind of training which fits the model.

3. **Believers' Church today.** A third significant challenge has to do with the way Mennonite churches and seminaries express what it means to have a Believers' Church identity as a corrective to mainstream Protestant or Roman Catholic churches or as justifying a separate ethnic existence. Today thinkers and activists in many Christian churches are seeking viable faith, action, mission and community in a world where Christianity has become a minority religion. Today the ethnic existence is crumbling. We would do well to begin thinking about being a Believers' Church in terms of a comprehensive vision rather than primarily in terms of justifying a marginal ethnic existence. We would do well to work toward something like a Believers' Church theological culture which has its own integrity, rather than depending on being a corrective to mainstream churches.

Summary. Finally, the future of the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries depends upon sensitivity to God's purposes in the coming years. God likely has more surprises in store for the churches and the seminaries in the next 25 years than we currently perceive. Let us look toward the future in the trust that God will indeed both sustain and surprise us. •

Most of the pastors, spouses (and some children) who attended the 1983 January interterm at AMBS. Among those in the photograph are people from British Columbia, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, California, Indiana, Kansas, Minnesota, Ohio, Oregon, South Dakota and Washington.

The January interterm and the pastors' week have become well-accepted ways in which AMBS continues its task of providing education for people in congregational work who cannot take a full year at a time for study.

Henry Poettcker, president of MBS and professor of New Testament at AMBS

My vision is for growing spiritual community

Henry Poettcker

The stated purpose of the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries is a vision to carry on a program for preparing men and women for the task of helping to interpret the continuing significance of the message of Scripture and to witness to that message in word and deed.

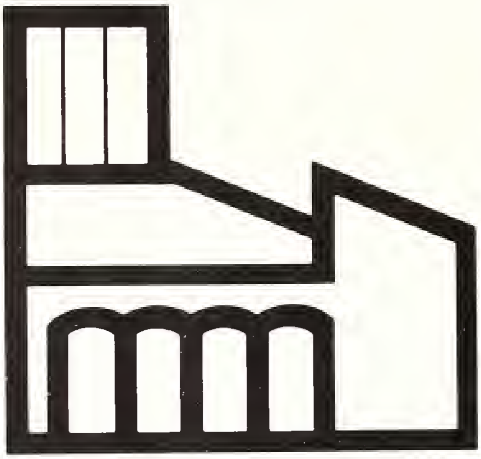
A vision for the future reminds us of the words of the prophet Joel, who wrote that when God's Spirit is poured out, the result will be visions and dreams. Relating those to the purpose of AMBS, we underscore that the message we have to proclaim also serves as the inspiration to do so. Notwithstanding, there is a continual call to let that message speak in relevant terms. This message of God's love in Christ comes to us as a priceless legacy, yet it will mean little if it is not translated into understandable terms.

Seminary training seeks to offer to those in our churches the setting and the tools to enable the kind of study about which Timothy is instructed. "Study to show yourself approved of God . . . rightly dividing the word of truth." Such a statement speaks of both the intellectual understanding and the practical application to everyday life.

My vision for the future of AMBS sees a continued wrestling with the tension between doing solid academic work yet being no less intent on fostering the spiritual growth and developing the practical ways to live out the Christian life—loving people in everyday situations.

That speaks of intensive encounter, but the world is an intense place and the continuing developments today (I need only mention the mad nuclear armaments race) call for the deepest commitment and loyalty to Christ which in his grace we are able to make.

What are the ingredients which such a vision in such a situation needs to incorporate? We believe that our cooperative venture thus far—with its positive results—can be developed further. We think that our dialogue with our churches is indicating some of the areas that need special attention: evangelism, church planting, solid Christian education in every department of our church program. We see our association with General Conference agencies moving to more fruitful ways of relating to a common task.



The world is an intense place, and the continuing developments today call for the deepest commitment and loyalty to Christ which in his grace we are able to make.

At AMBS we are currently engaged in a two-year, long-range planning project funded in part by a grant from Lilly Endowment, Inc., of Indianapolis which makes possible release time for some administrators and faculty to give concentrated attention to AMBS's task of training for ministry. The findings of this study affirmed a number of the needs that have become evident, and we envision several steps that need to be taken: (1) appointment of faculty to enable adequate emphasis on evangelism and church planting, (2) close ties and possible joint personnel appointments with our church agencies focused on Christian education, (3) concentration on the special skills for communicating the Christian faith, (4) special emphases for minority groups and their particular training needs. There will be other steps to be delineated in the next months.

The critical time in which we are placed calls us to consolidate our resources—financial and personnel—to avoid unnecessary duplication and to do the task more adequately.

I envision a growing (not only in quantity but more so in spiritual quality) seminary community where personal growth, mutual inspiration and correction find their reality, where acquiring and sharpening skills for ministry continues to be the norm, and where willing and Spirit-gifted servants find the needed renewal to be compassionate enablers both to those inside the fellowship and to those outside. •

Weather-wise but otherwise. . .?

Howard H. Charles

Weather forecasting is big business in Canada and the United States. It is also a science. Each day reasonably reliable forecasts are available from local TV and radio stations.

A service like this was not available to Palestinians in Jesus' day. Each had to be his or her own weather prophet. But thanks to geography, their situation was less complex than ours. In winter a moisture-laden wind from the Mediterranean striking the cooler hill country normally resulted in rain clouds first, then showers. In summer a strong south wind blowing out of the desert was certain to bring heat.

Nature had its code. The Palestinians had learned to read it with accuracy. They shaped their conduct accordingly.

Jesus was not critical of his people's skill in forecasting the weather. But he was perplexed at their inability to interpret properly the times in which they were living. They were blind to the meaning of what was happening about them. They did not understand the truly important issues of the day nor the ultimate outcome of the choices they were making. They were weather-wise but otherwise not wise.

Jesus regarded the times as critical. The King had come "in the name of the Lord" and was unrecognized. The nation did not know "the time of (its) visitation." His people were blind to "the things that make for peace." The fruit of that failure would be the undoing of their beloved city (Luke 19:38-44).

The gravity of the situation is strikingly underscored in the three paragraphs immediately following our text. If a defaulting debtor is wise, he will make every effort to settle with his creditor while being dragged to the court. Otherwise he will find himself in jail, from which there is no release until full payment has been made. The point: settle now before judgment falls (Luke 12:57-59).

Again, the tragic fate that befell the Galileans whom Pilate slaughtered in the temple should not obscure the danger of those reporting the event to Jesus. They too would perish unless they radically altered their ways of thinking and behaving (Luke 13:1-5).

Finally, the same point is made by the parable of the barren fig tree. Fruitless for three years, it was ordered cut down. Only because of the intercession of the caretaker was it spared, and conditionally at that. If no fruit was forthcoming during the next year, the axe would fall (Luke 13:6-9).

SEMINARY
PARKING

Are we able to read the "signs" of the times in terms of Jesus or are we "parking" while our "time" passes us by?

Unfortunately, Jesus' indictment and the attended warnings were unheeded by the leadership and many others. The predicted fall of the city, together with horrible suffering and mass human slaughter, occurred in the Jewish rebellion against Rome 40 years later.

The important question can be put simply. Why were people who were weather-wise so blind otherwise?

To be sure, interpreting the times is more difficult than forecasting the weather. The human situation is more complex. Even so, Jesus expected a better performance than they gave. Their failure was not due to a lack of interest in "signs" as clues to understanding (Luke 11:15ff., 29). The great sign of God's intention to reorder human life and to establish his reign on the earth was among them but they misread the evidence. The light was shining, but the eye was diseased (Luke 11:33-36). Out of inner darkness they interpreted Jesus in terms of their times rather than the times in terms of Jesus.

A more important question that may haunt us is the contemporary one. For all our sophistication in dealing with the winds of earth, is it possible we may not sense the winds of God blowing in our times? Can we read the sky politically, economically and in a dozen other ways and yet not be able to discern the message of the heavens for ourselves, our families, our congregations, our communities?

Paul's concern was similar to that of Jesus. "Be very careful," he wrote, "about the sort of lives you lead, like intelligent and not like senseless people. This may be a wicked age, but your lives should redeem it. And do not be thoughtless but recognize what is the will of the Lord" (Ephesians 5:15-17).

books
to educate / to challenge / to live by

Still in the Image

Waldemar Janzen

The author, a Bible teacher at Canadian Mennonite Bible College, has collected some of his addresses and papers into a coherent and eminently readable volume. Subtitled "Essays in Biblical Theology and Anthropology" it offers several groupings of essays on subjects that attempt to respond biblically to the question: What does it mean to live as a human being under God? The first group, Bridging the Distance, addresses the question of divine-human communication. The second group, Blessings and Boundaries, looks at human existence and limitation. The third group, In Quest of Place, considers our orientation in God's world. The fourth group, The Burden of War, responds to the problem of human destructiveness.

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Nominees for General Conference elections

The General Conference nominating committee has prepared its nominations for the ballot at the triennial sessions Aug. 1-7 at Bethlehem, Pa. Delegates may make further nominations at the conference. Information comparable to that printed below with signature of both nominator and nominee must be submitted in writing to the conference secretary by 12:30 on Wednesday, Aug. 3. This information will be made available to delegates several hours in advance of the voting on Thursday, Aug. 4. (Fraction votes will be rejected. Votes cast must be in whole numbers.)

Each term is for six years, except for the president, vice president and secretary, who serve for three years.

The nominating committee consists of Clayton Auernheimer, Reedley, Calif., Pacific District; Susan R. Letkemann, London, Ont., and Walter Franz, Altona, Man., both representing the Conference of Mennonites in Canada; Stanley Voth, Henderson, Neb., Northern District; Dotty Janzen, Hillsboro, Kan., Western District; Stanley Fretz, Lansdale, Pa., Eastern District; and Bertha Harder, Elkhart, Ind., Central District.

President

David M. Hillegas, pastor, Saucon Mennonite Church, Coopersburg, Pa.; Eastern District Conference minister; EDC president and ministerial committee member, 1980-82; member, Camp Men-O-Lan board of directors, 1967-80, chairman, 1969-80; former member, EDC retreat committee, Sunday school union and young people's union executive. Vision: "The General Conference should help area conferences and local congregations be effective in their mission for Christ and should carry on programs these bodies cannot handle on their own."

Jacob Tilitzky, General Conference president; member, General Board, 1974-; pastor, Eben-Ezer Mennonite Church, Abbotsford, B. C., 1963-77, 1982-; chairman, Conference of Mennonites in British Columbia, 1964-66, 1970-72; chairman, Conference of Mennonites in Canada, 1972-74; conference coordinator, Conference of Mennonites in British Columbia, 1978-81. Vision: "In reflecting on our 300-year Mennonite history in North America and with a keen awareness of the times in which we live, it is apparent that we need to refocus our identity (theology), our reason for existence (mission) and our place in the Christian milieu (relationships). The centrality of Christ in this focus is imperative. To him and to this I dedicate myself."

Vice president

Florence Driedger, social development consultant, part-time education coordinator, Conference of Mennonites in Canada in native awareness; part-time director, Family Service Bureau and lecturer in social work; member, Grace Mennonite Church, Regina; executive member, Mennonite Central Committee board; former board member, CMBC, SCBI and numerous other boards and committees in the local churches in five Saskatchewan communities; former chairperson, CMC's Congregational Resources Board's review task force. Vision: "To have church structures such as the General Conference help members individually and corporately not only be the church within the organized church but within the community and in all aspects of daily living."

James Gingerich, pastor, First Mennonite Church, Moundridge, Kan.; member, Pacific District Christian service committee, 1961-64; Western District peace and social concerns committee, 1967-73; president, WDC, 1975-78; WDC ministerial committee, 1978-; GC committee on the ministry, 1978-. Vision: "Recognizing our divergent makeup, to remain sensitive to congregations, regional conferences, commissions and various theological and geographical concerns; to provide overall coordination for the work of the General Conference and to make Christ our cornerstone."

Secretary

John Friesen, professor, Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg; chairperson, Fort Garry Mennonite Fellowship, Winnipeg; member, evangelism committee which reported at Estes Park, 1980; chairperson, history archives committee, Conference of Mennonites in Canada. Vision: "The General Board has an important role to play in coordinating programs, delegating authority and providing leadership in the conference on the basis of our Anabaptist/Mennonite heritage."

Norma Wiens, homemaker; Western District Conference treasurer and General Board secretary; missionary under COM in India, 1965-73; president, WDC Women in Mission 1978-79; member, WDC home mission committee 1976-83; member, Faith Mennonite Church, Newton, Kan. Vision: "My hope for the General Conference is that we will continue to be God's people of the Word as we work together on basic issues of faith and ethics and as we respond to the need of those outside our congregations."

Driedger

Gingerich

Hillegas

Tilitzky

Friesen

Wiens

Fast

Hacker

Boyer

Epp

Harder

Regier

Stauffer

Unrau

General Board

Elect one

Loretta Fast, part-time nurse and homemaker; member, Toronto United Mennonite Church; member, General Board, 1977-; missionary under MCC and COM in India, 1962-65. Vision: "General Board should reflect congregations in their concerns, faith and mission. When this happens, we can work together to accomplish our God-given tasks."

Ray K. Hacker, library director, Millersville State College; president, Mennonite Historians of Eastern Pennsylvania, 1974-82; secretary, library and heritage center committee of the MHEP, 1979-; former member, Eastern District education and publication committee; former board member, Germantown Mennonite Church Corporation; member, board of directors, Lancaster County Council of Churches, 1982-; member, Bethel Mennonite Church, Lancaster, Pa. Vision: "The General Board should function as listeners and motivators to the commissions, its workers, the district conferences and congregations, thus enabling each unit to work together in the fellowship of Christ."

Continuing members of the General Board include Kenneth Bauman, Berne, Ind., Irene Dunn, Normal, Ill., and Anna Juhnke, North Newton, Kan. In addition each commission appoints two members, the seminary board one member and the General Board two members.

Education

Elect three

Claude Boyer, pastor, First Mennonite Church, Reedley, Calif.; former pastorates, First Mennonite Church, Sugarcreek, Ohio, and Deep Run Mennonite Church, Bedminster, Pa.; associate director, MCC VS; former member, COE; former president, Central District Conference; former advisory editor, *The Mennonite*. Vision: "COE has the responsibility of providing good resources for congregations in individual, family and congregational Christian nurture. Of special significance are areas of marriage enrichment and family development."

Bruno Epp, student, Clinical Pastoral Education; church worker under COM in Paraguay and Brazil, 1954-72; pastor in Canadian churches, 1974-81; member of COE; chairperson, Department of Literature Development; member, General Board; member, Langley (B.C.), Mennonite Fellowship. Vision: "COE will continue to minister responsibly to the growth needs of people of all ages, vocations and status within and, if appropriate, beyond the GC constituency."

Milton J. Harder, pastor, Grace Mennonite Church, Lansdale, Pa.; former director of youth work and editor of curriculum materials under COE; writer of youth and adult Bible study guides; served under MCC in Europe; served in alcoholism and prison ministries. Vision: "Education in the home, in the local church, in schools and through publications continues to be the chief means of equipping for ministry, transmitting our heritage and shaping our message for today."

Rosella Wiens Regier, homemaker and elementary school teacher, former worker at Gulfport, Miss., under Board of Missions, 1958-70; secretary, Western District Conference, 1975-77; vice president, WDC, 1979-; WDC program committee, 1981-; *Foundation Series* curriculum writer, workshop leader, revision writer, 1975-85; member, Walton (Kan.) Mennonite Church. Vision: "COE should provide resources to nurture children, challenge youth, disciple adults in the context of the congregation that will help people mature in faith and carry out the Great Commission."

Suzanne Stauffer, homemaker; former high school English teacher; summer VS worker in Mexico, 1960, and Camp Friedenswald, 1961; member, First Mennonite Church, Sugarcreek, Ohio; two-year member, planning committee for Central District Conference Music Camp; member, CDC music committee. Vision: "If called, I will serve."

Helen Unrau, Christian education director, Altona (Man.) Bergthaler Mennonite Church; Sunday school superintendent; member, education resources committee of the Conference of Mennonites in Manitoba; *Foundation Series* resource person for Manitoba. Vision: "The Commission on Education should keep in touch with the local congregations and provide direction and resources to help them in their educational efforts, particularly adult education."

Continuing members of the Commission on Education include Thayne Balzer, Portland, Ore., Michelle Friesen-Carper, Houston, Vivian Gering, Freeman, S.D., Kenneth Loewen, Gretna, Man., Lois Preheim, Aurora, Neb., Elaine Rich, Bluffton, Ohio, and Fred Unruh, St. Catharines, Ont. Additional members are appointed by the U.S. district conferences, the Conference of Mennonites in Canada and Women in Mission.

Overseas Mission

Elect three

Carl Epp, farmer; member, Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson, Neb.; president, Northern District young people's fellowship; vice president, NDC Mennonite Men; member, NDC education committee, 1967-72; secretary, NDC, 1960-1962; director, MCC hurricane reconstruction project, Dominican Republic, 1980-81. Vision: "Sharing the gospel can be effective when there is also a sharing of concern for justice, peace and salvation of the whole person."

Dorothy Franz, homemaker; member, Menno Church, Ritzville, Wash.; member, Pacific District home mission committee, 1974-83; former president, PDC Women in Mission. Vision: "The Commission on Overseas Mission should be the body through which all congregations work together to serve Christ."

Epp

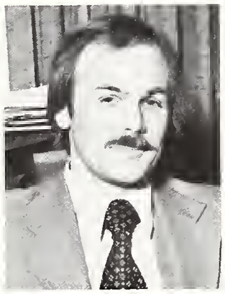
Franz

Juhnke

Kehler

Ramseyer

Sprunger


Early

D. Friesen

James Juhnke, professor of history, Bethel College; chairman, Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission Board, 1980-83; author of 1979 history of GC overseas missions, *A People of Mission*; MCC Botswana country director, 1971-73; member, Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton, Kan. Vision: "The work of missions must be rooted in our biblical mandate and attentive to the needs of receiving peoples for spiritual renewal and justice in community."

Larry Kehler, general secretary, Conference of Mennonites in Canada; member, Charleswood Mennonite Church, Winnipeg; director, MCC Information Services, 1961-67; editor, *The Canadian Mennonite*, 1967-71; editor, *The Mennonite*, 1971-76; pastor, Charleswood Mennonite Church, 1976-80; staff, MCC (Canada) Overseas Services, 1980-81. Vision: "That COM be as ready to listen as to speak, that it be as concerned about righteousness and justice as it is about numerical growth and that it be as sensitive to the overseas churches' aspirations as it is to the wishes of its North American constituency."

Alice Ruth Ramseyer, homemaker; student, Mennonite Biblical Seminary; member, Hively Avenue Mennonite Church, Elkhart, Ind.; served as missionary in Japan for 18 years; former member, African Inter-Mennonite Mission board. Vision: "COM is a servant of the church as one arm for mission and a leader of the church in moving us toward a broader and deeper vision for mission."

Charles E. Sprunger, biomedical equipment technician; pastor, Hereford Mennonite Church, Bally, Pa., 1975-82; missionary to Zaire under COM, 1957-72; member, Eastern District mission committee, 1976-82; chairman, board of directors, Crossroads Community Center, Philadelphia, 1977-82. Vision: "Expand our partnership with young and developing churches overseas as they share the good news of salvation through Christ, and challenge our American congregations with these overseas opportunities and needs."

Continuing members of the Commission on Overseas Mission include Al Bauman, Columbus, Ohio, William Block, Morden, Man., Anne Falk, Edmonton, John R. Friesen, Winnipeg, Jake Harms, Winnipeg, and Harold Rittenhouse, Harleysville, Pa. Additional members are appointed by the U.S. district conferences, the Conference of Mennonites in Canada and Women in Mission.

Home Ministries

Elect three

Richard K. Early, pastor, Zion Mennonite Church, Souderton, Pa.; chairman, Eastern District resolution committee, 1983-; former pastor, Charlottesville (Va.) Mennonite Church; missionary in Uruguay, 1975-76; president, Intercollegiate Peace Fellowship, 1973-74; assistant director, Pear St. Center, halfway house for alcoholics and drug addicts, Harrisonburg, Va. Vision: "Being from non-Mennonite background (United Methodist), I am excited to share the living and dynamic biblical discipleship I have found in the Mennonite church. My vision is to see CHM plant more churches in the non-ethnic Mennonite communities."

Dorothy Nickel Friesen, student, St. Paul School of Theology, Kansas City, Mo.; pastoral intern; Rainbow Boulevard Mennonite Church, Kansas City, Kan.; former high school English/reading teacher in public and alternative education; MVS reference council, 1975-80; VS worker in Arvada, Colo., 1969-71. Vision: "CHM, working with the other agencies and people, can be and is the cutting edge of Christian faith. It must advocate for those who are voiceless."

Elmer L. Friesen, semiretired from farm; member, Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson, Neb.; former deacon, chorus director, Sunday school superintendent; secretary, Northern District Conference; member, NDC home missions committee. Vision: "With so many of our people moving to the cities, CHM must put forth every effort so that these people are not lost to the church, especially to the Mennonite church."

Alfred Heer, real estate broker; president, Pacific District Conference, 1980-; former PDC vice president; former member, PDC program committee; chairman, nominating committee for 1980 General Conference; member, First Mennonite Church, Paso Robles, Calif. Vision: "As a district president I have become aware of the need of CHM to work with the districts and local congregations in the areas of church planting, evangelism and witnessing through service in the vast mission field we have in the United States and Canada."

Lynn Liechty, mechanical contracting business; past vice president, Central District Conference; Menno Project in Colombia, 1978; past member, CDC home missions committee; member, First Mennonite Church, Berne, Ind. Vision: "To maintain the vision and programming of increased evangelism and church planting with strong emphasis on our unique Anabaptist understanding of the gospel as it relates to all our relationships."

Malcolm Wenger, pastor, Selkirk (Man.) Christian Fellowship; served with GC Board of Missions as missionary to Northern Cheyenne, 1944-66, representative for American Indian work, 1962-66, secretary for home missions and evangelism, 1966-68; with the Northern District Conference as member of home missions committee, 1960-63, vice president, 1964, president, 1965, conference minister, 1969-71; with CHM as secretary for Indian ministries, 1969-77; executive secretary, Native Ministries, Conference of Mennonites in Canada, 1979-82. Vision: "I see CHM as a servant to congregations in outreach and service, in grappling with issues of ethics and justice and in building fellowship among the diverse peoples the gospel brings together."

Continuing members on the Commission on Home Ministries include Paul Boschman, Vancouver, Marian Franz, Washington, Ivorie Lowe, Markham, Ill., Ted Pankratz, Hutchinson, Kan., Donald Steelberg, Wadsworth, Ohio, and Leonard Wiebe, Newton, Kan. Additional members are appointed by the U.S. district conferences, the Conference of Mennonites in Canada and Women in Mission.

Seminary

Elect four

Menno Epp, pastor, Foothills Mennonite Church, Calgary; teacher and principal, Bethel Bible Institute, Abbotsford, B.C., 1957-69; summer director, Camp Squeah, 1961-69; secretary, Conference of Mennonites in Canada, 1973-75; member, Mennonite Biblical Seminary board of trustees, 1980-83. Vision: "My desire for the seminary is to strengthen its program to equip pastors (and others) 'to equip the saints for the work of ministry' (Ephesians 4:12)."

John A. Esau, pastor, Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton, Kan.; member, advisory board for Faith and Life Bookstore in Newton, Kan.; chairman, Kidron-Bethel Retirement Services for Newton-North Newton; former vice president of Western District Conference and member of its program committee. Vision: "My interest is in developing strong and effective local congregations with pastors trained by our seminary to provide sound leadership."

Calvin Flickinger, elementary teacher; First Mennonite Church, Phoenix, Ariz.; Pacific District Conference positions: education committee, nominating committee, program committee; missionary to Colombia and Oraibi, Ariz. Vision: "Being an alumnus of the seminary, I hope I can give some input to the ongoing relationship between the seminary and the constituency."

Dorothea Janzen, co-pastor, Trinity Mennonite Church, Hillsboro, Kan.; member, MBS board, 1977- ; vice president, Western District Conference, 1980-82; Great Plains Seminary Education board; part-time college teacher at Hesston, Tabor and Bethel colleges. Vision: "My vision for the seminary board is to keep before us the importance of calling, training and sending leaders into our conference. Working together in this task with the Mennonite Church is a model of unity and good stewardship of our resources."

Waldemar Janzen, professor of Old Testament, Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg; minister, First Mennonite Church, Winnipeg; former member, Board of Christian Service, Conference of Mennonites in Canada; former member, consulting committee on *The Mennonite*; former GC representative, Commission on Faith and Order; member, Mennonite Biblical Seminary board. Vision: "To preserve and support the biblical emphasis in the curriculum of the seminary is important to me. Also, I hope that my Canadian perspective and my experience as a teacher of Bible and administrator in one of our colleges may benefit the work of the seminary board."

Fredrick H. Liechty, president, First Bank of Berne, Ind.; member, First Mennonite Church, Berne; member, department of Faith and Life Press, 1955-77; member, Central District peace and service committee, 1964-68; member, Mennonite Biblical Seminary board, 1978-79; appointed, financial consultant, MBS board, 1980-83. Vision: "While the primary thrust of the seminary is to provide biblical training for its various students and graduates, the board is often confronted with questions and problems of finance. It is my desire to contribute my 33 years of financial experience in this area as a board member."

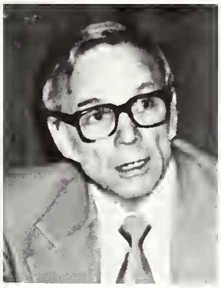
Eleanor Loewen, education consultant, Conference of Mennonites in Canada; member, Charleswood Mennonite Church, Winnipeg; former director of student services, COE; VS, Camp Friedenswald. Vision: "MBS should provide the environment where people can explore and integrate faith and knowledge for service in the global Mennonite church."

Peter J. Neufeld, associate pastor, Bethel Mennonite Church, Mountain Lake, Minn., since 1975; former pastor, Bethany Mennonite Church, Kingman, Kan., and Fairview Park (Ohio) Christian Fellowship; former member, Western District education committee; member, Northern District retreat committee. Vision: "Our seminary should help students acquire a thorough understanding of people, as well as a deep and personal knowledge of God and how to meaningfully bring the two together."

Continuing members of the board of Mennonite Biblical Seminary include Marjorie Ediger, Arvada, Colo., Darrell Fast, Toronto, Helen Kruger, Kitchener, Ont., Myron Schrag, Minneapolis, and Donovan Smucker, Waterloo, Ont. One additional member is appointed by Women in Mission.

E. Friesen

Heer


L. Liechty

Wenger

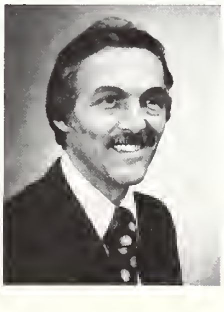
Epp

Esau

Flickinger

D. Janzen

W. Janzen


F. Liechty

Loewen

Neufeld

Santa Clara (Calif.) Ethnic Chinese Mennonite Church had a Chinese food sale Feb. 27. Proceeds of $200 from the sale and other funds collected amounted to $650, which they gave to Mennonite Central Committee for Kampuchean children's school kits. Each kit costs approximately $3. "We praise the Lord that we are learning to give from those who are concerned about us and support us," said Adam Liu, the church's pastor.

Non-violent solutions to interpersonal conflict are absent on American TV programs, says a Syracuse University psychology professor. "It would help a great deal," says Arnold P. Goldstein, "if during some reasonable proportion of the average 27.6 hours per week that Johnny watches television, he would see non-violent solutions to interpersonal conflict, cooperation rather than selfishness, marital understanding and not marital abuse, empathy, caring, sharing, and in general, the best human behavior, not the worst."

NEWS

Central District adopts resolution on Salvadorans

Pandora, Ohio—Careful planning and thorough preparation allowed even the most difficult parts of the agenda at this year's Central District Conference to be handled with ease, as delegates gathered at Pandora's Grace Mennonite Church April 7-10.

A resolution encouraging aid to Salvadoran refugees in the United States and nearly two dozen constitutional revisions were the most demanding items of business at this year's sessions, although debate on each lasted scarcely longer than an hour.

The resolution on aid to Salvadorans was presented to the assembly by Menno Ediger, co-pastor at Community Mennonite Church in Markham, Ill. That congregation voted last November to become involved in offering sanctuary to Central American refugees fleeing repressive regimes in their home countries.

During the initial discussion on the statement several amendments were made, including one from Ted VanderEnde, pastor of Pandora's St. John Mennonite Church, which called on CDC churches to study the matter of aid to Salvadorans without binding them to assist in providing aid or declaring themselves as sanctuaries.

The final resolution read, in part, "be it resolved that we . . . become boldly vocal and bodily visible in responding to God's call in Jesus Christ . . . in affirming and supporting the Community Mennonite Church of Markham and others in their decision to offer aid and/or sanctuary to Salvadorans uprooted because of greed, violence and lack of love and justice, [and] in committing ourselves and exhorting each other to a faith in action prepared to live with the consequences related to this matter." The statement was approved by a unanimous voice vote.

Part of the ease with which the resolution passed on the conference floor might have been attributed to a seminar on the issue the day before, during which those who had concerns about the proposed action could engage in dialogue with others more familiar with the problem. Some initial revisions were made as a result of that workshop. Good preparation and a thorough, deliberate presentation were the keys to the success of the constitutional alterations as well.

The revisions are aimed primarily at altering the CDC's administrative structure and allowing the inclusion of CDC members of General Conference commissions as ex officio members of district committees. The conference's executive committee becomes its "board of directors" (since CDC owns some properties), while the position of vice president becomes "president-elect." In keeping with organizational patterns within the Mennonite Church, the president-elect will succeed the presi-

Menno Ediger, co-pastor of Community Mennonite Church, Markham, Ill., leads a seminar on aid to Salvadorans at Central District Conference.

CONFERENCE EDITION OF
THE MENNONITE

Christ the Cornerstone for Mennonites

Introduction

The 1980-83 triennial reports from the General Board, commissions, Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Division of Administration and Women in Mission will appear as inserts in the April 26 and May 10 issues of *The Mennonite*. These reports will be bound in the report book available to delegates and visitors at the triennial sessions, Aug. 1-7, 1983, at Lehigh University, Bethlehem, Pa. These reports are an account of our work the past three years.

The triennial sessions are important to strengthen the feeling of togetherness in the General Conference family and to discern the priorities for our working together in 1983-86. If you are unable to attend the conference sessions, share your concerns, ideas and questions with someone else from your congregation who will be there. *Vern Preheim, editor*

General Secretary

"I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, thankful for your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now" (Philippians 1:3, 5).

Partnership catches the spirit of General Conference. A few facets of that partnership are the congregations working together in the various conferences; boards, commissions, divisions, committees and reference councils of the General Conference carrying out their mandates under the broad coordination of the General Board; connecting points with sister conferences overseas through the Commission on Overseas Mission, Mennonite Central Committee and Mennonite World Conference.

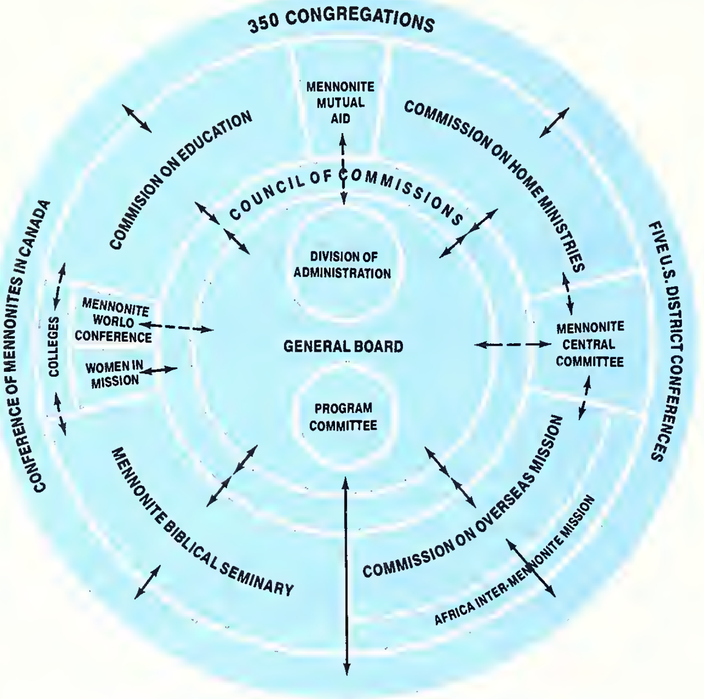
We give thanks to God for what he is doing in our midst through his Spirit and for what he is doing through us by his Spirit in many places around Canada, the United States and the world.

The triennium just completed has been a good one in most respects but not without some disappointments, difficulties and tensions. The issue of whether or not the conference should collect taxes on the wages of its employees when they request that this not be done continues to be an unresolved issue.

During the triennium, congregations at Mather, Man., and Montezuma, Kan., disbanded. However, congregations in Leamington, Ont., and Curitiba, Brazil, divided, each becoming two, so that the number of congregations remained the same throughout the triennium. The General Board is recommending 22 congregations for membership. An additional one or two may be processed before the triennial sessions begin. The net gain in congregations for 1980-83 will be at least

The 17-member General Board meeting at First Mennonite Church, Newton, Kan., March 8.

GENERAL CONFERENCE MENNONITE CHURCH


350 CONGREGATIONS
MENNONITE MUTUAL AID
COMMISSION ON EDUCATION
COMMISSION ON HOME MINISTRIES
COUNCIL OF COMMISSIONS
DIVISION OF ADMINISTRATION
GENERAL BOARD
PROGRAM COMMITTEE
CONFERENCE OF MENNONITES IN CANADA
COLLEGES
MENNONITE WORLD CONFERENCE
WOMEN IN MISSION
MENNONITE CENTRAL COMMITTEE
FIVE U.S. DISTRICT CONFERENCES
MENNONITE BIBLICAL SEMINARY
COMMISSION ON OVERSEAS MISSION
AFRICA INTER-MENNONITE MISSION

22, which is the largest since the 1944-47 triennium when 22 congregations were added in the 1946 merger of the Middle District with the Central Conference; an additional 20 congregations were accepted in 1947. The chart below reflects the growth pattern of General Conference in congregations and in total membership since 1860. We began the triennium with 327 congregations and 63,588 members; we will end it with at least 349 congregations and 65,247 members.

Relating to Congregations

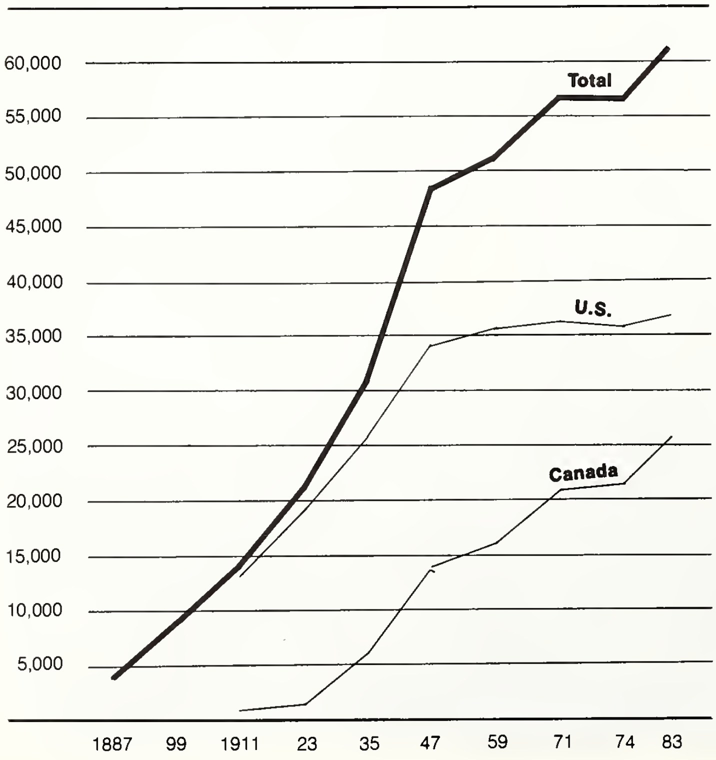
The most effective communication is the personal visit. Staff members devote many hours to contacts in the constituency. VS workers, missionaries and board members also visit the congregations. Intercommission staff visits, such as the one by the executives to the Central District in November 1982, are useful to listen and to give an overview of General Conference. Each entity in the conference has an important role which must be seen and appreciated in the context of the whole.

Our president, Jacob Tilitzky, visited the member congregations in South America in February. Marvin and Jeannie Zehr, on behalf of the General Board and Women in Mission, devoted two months last summer to contacting churches in Pennsylvania, the Northern District, Saskatchewan and Alberta.

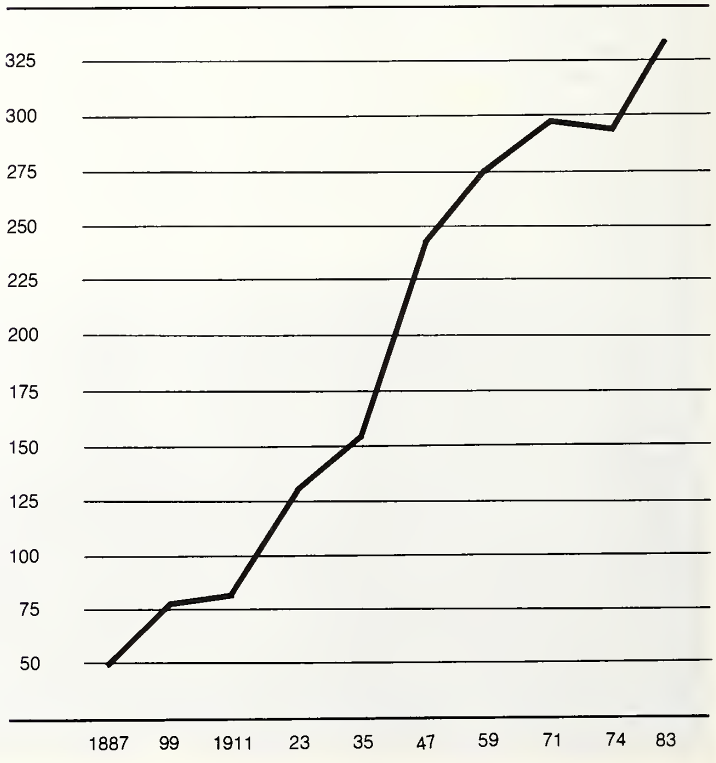
The Issue of Withholding Taxes

At the 1980 triennial sessions, the conference authorized the General Board to initiate a judicial action seeking exemption for the General Conference Mennonite Church from withholding taxes from the income of its employees. James Gingerich, Duane Heffelbower, Larry Voth, Robert Hull and

General Conference Mennonite Church
North America Membership, 1887-1983



General Conference Mennonite Church
Congregations in North America, 1887-1983



Vern Preheim were appointed as a judicial action committee to implement the resolution. William Ball was engaged as legal counsel. In March 1982, Ball advised the conference that the general climate in the United States, the attitude of the present government administration and the attitude of the Supreme Court as evidenced by some recent decisions dealing with religious conviction or conscience and taxes were such that the likelihood of the General Conference accomplishing its objectives through a judicial action was virtually nil. The committee recommended and the General Board concurred to put the judicial action on hold and to bring the matter once again to the conference for further discernment and decision. A more detailed report and a recommendation from the General Board to the conference that we honor the requests of employees to not withhold taxes on their wages will be sent to the congregations in advance of the triennial sessions.

Throughout the past three years, while pursuing judicial action, we also continued to encourage the enactment of World Peace Tax Fund legislation.

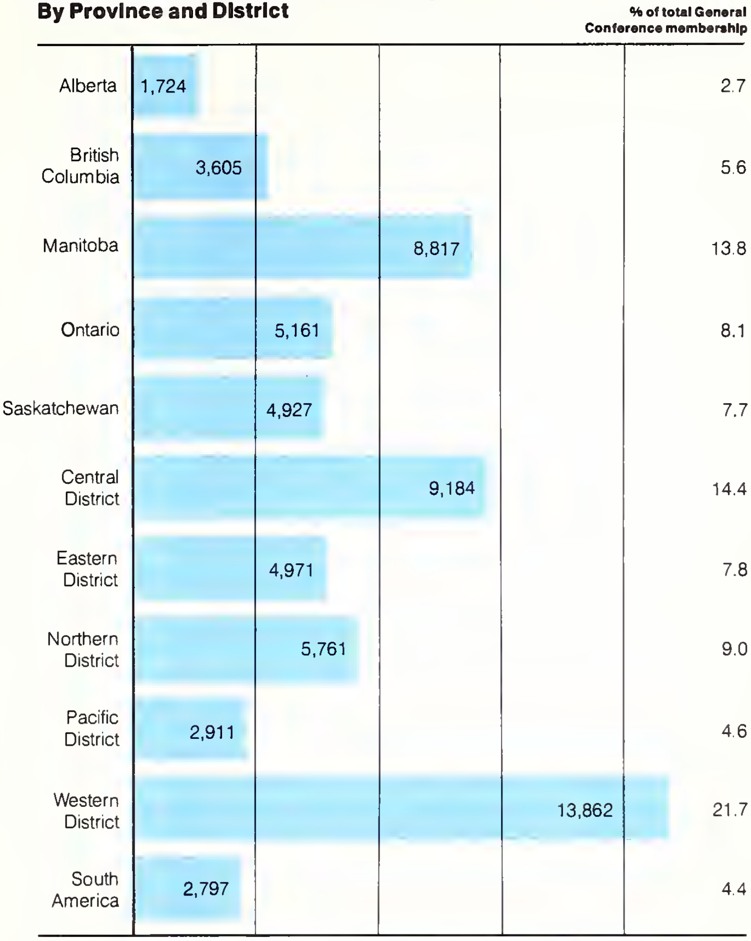
Communications

A committee of seven gives overall direction to conference communications. *Der Bote* in German, with a circulation of 7,042, and *The Mennonite* in English, with a circulation of 14,836, are the two official conference publications. *Leadership* goes to 500 pastors and other leaders bimonthly.

Several newsletters are available on specialist subjects to interested readers. Brochures and audiovisuals are produced annually to inform people about resources available and work done through the conference.

Four or five information/fund appeal letters are sent each year to the homes. Five bulletin inserts are provided in bulk to the congregations annually. *Vern Preheim*

General Conference 1982 Membership By Province and District



Vern Preheim, general secretary, Jacob Tilitzky, president, and Norma Wiens, recording secretary, providing leadership at a special consultation on General Conference structures.

General Board

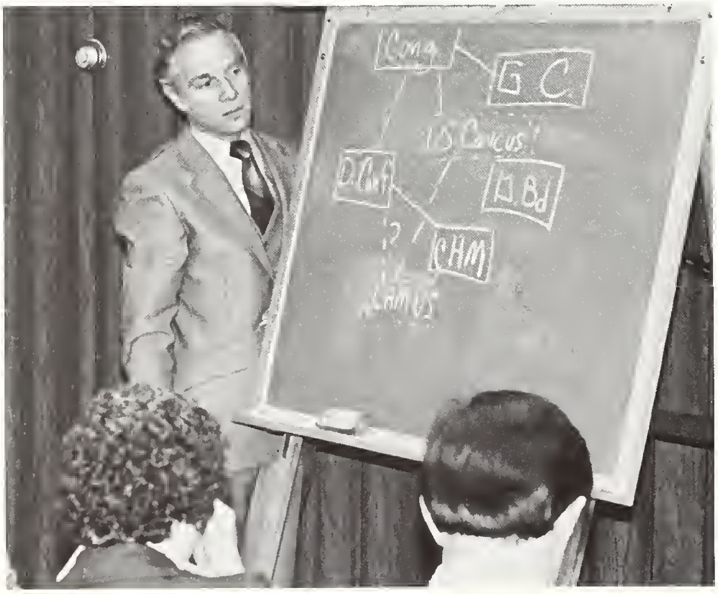
Estes Park '80 brought with it the leadership of Vern Preheim as general secretary of the conference. Following a review by the entire General Board, which was affirmative, the board voted at its February meeting to extend his term for another three-year period. Other reappointments during this triennium have been Bernie Wiebe, editor of *The Mennonite*, Stanley Bohn, executive secretary of the Commission on Home Ministries, Jake Friesen, director of Ministerial Leadership Services, Larry Cornies, associate editor of *The Mennonite*, and Gerhard Ens, editor of *Der Bote*. Several new appointments were also made: Ray Frey to the new position of stewardship secretary, Erwin Rempel as executive secretary of the Commission on Overseas Mission and John W. Sprunger as executive secretary of the Commission on Education.

In this triennium considerable time has been spent on two issues: (1) the tax withholding case and (2) U.S./Canadian relations. The tax case is discussed in greater detail in the general secretary's report. It will again be considered by the delegate body at Bethlehem '83.

The moderator of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada and U.S. district conference presidents have met with the General Board executive committee on four occasions to work out details for restructuring the General Conference by creating a U.S. delegate body. This will provide a forum for dealing with concerns that are national in nature, such as the draft, or with programs that have their own organization and funding in Canada, such as native ministries and church planting. The first meeting of this delegate body, called the "U.S. Caucus," will be Monday afternoon, Aug. 1, at Bethlehem, Pa.

Responding to the resolution at Estes Park '80, a committee was appointed to study the human sexuality issue. Since the Mennonite Church also had a study of this under way, it was decided to appoint members from the two conferences to a joint study committee. They have met four times and have prepared the first of two papers, providing biblical background. The committee hopes to have the second paper, on social expressions, together with a study guide ready by the end of 1984. These would be acted on at the 1986 triennium.

Vern Preheim explaining proposed new structure to Council of Commissions 1982.



During this triennium the General Board has conducted in-depth reviews of the commissions. In November 1980, the General Board executive met with COE staff and commission members. The full board reviewed CHM in September 1981 and will review COM in October 1983. The General Board has also had special meetings with Mennonite-related agencies: Mennonite World Conference (1981), Mennonite Central Committee (1982) and Mennonite Mutual Aid Association (1983).

At its February 1982 meeting, the General Board voted, upon recommendation of the Division of Administration, to change the conference's fiscal year to begin Feb. 1. For purposes of planning, it seemed advisable not to have the budget year end in December when approximately 25 percent of contributions are received.

Revisions of the constitution have resulted in changing (1) the nominating procedure by the delegate body, (2) composition of the General Board to assure reasonable district and other representation and (3) number of proxy votes (five) or a combined total of 12 delegate and proxy votes. *Norma Wiens, secretary*

News Service

The General conference's news service provides reports about the denomination's activities, congregations and people to other media, both religious and secular. Every two weeks, articles about conference programs, national or international concerns, and features about personalities within the church are mailed to different combinations of mailing lists, depending on the nature of each story.

The most frequent users of the print service are *The Mennonite*, *Mennonite Weekly Review*, *Mennonite Reporter* and *Gospel Herald*. Stories of greater significance are circulated to an expanded mailing list and have found their way into such periodicals as *Christian Leader*, *Mennonite Brethren Herald*, *Evangelical Visitor*, *Sojourners*, *The Other Side*, *Christianity Today* and *The Christian Century*. Photographs frequently accompany articles, especially to Mennonite periodicals.

During the past triennium more than 600 articles, features and shorter news items have been distributed by the news service to newspapers, magazines, news services, electronic communications networks, radio and television stations in Canada and the United States, as well as to several select foreign periodicals. News service staff include Larry Cornies, news director, and Marion Keeney Preheim, staff writer. Both serve half time. Regional correspondents and other "stringers" are employed frequently to gather stories of a remote or local nature.

The year 1983 marks the first year that the conference's news service is becoming involved in broadcast news in a formal way. Although it has related to various broadcast agencies informally over the years, the news service this year became a constituent of Ecumedia News, an interfaith audio feed agency based in New York. Ecumedia News, directed by Steve Sprunger, uses General Conference news stories in a biweekly news feed which is distributed to radio and television outlets across the United States by mail and, beginning in March 1983, by satellite.

The freedom of information guidelines under which the news service operates, adopted by the General Board last year, allows news staff almost unrestricted access to conference decison-making processes, committee and staff meetings, and commission documents. It is a denominational responsibility and privilege highly prized by staff, who see conference structures and administration as ultimately responsible to the congregations and grass roots, not the other way around.

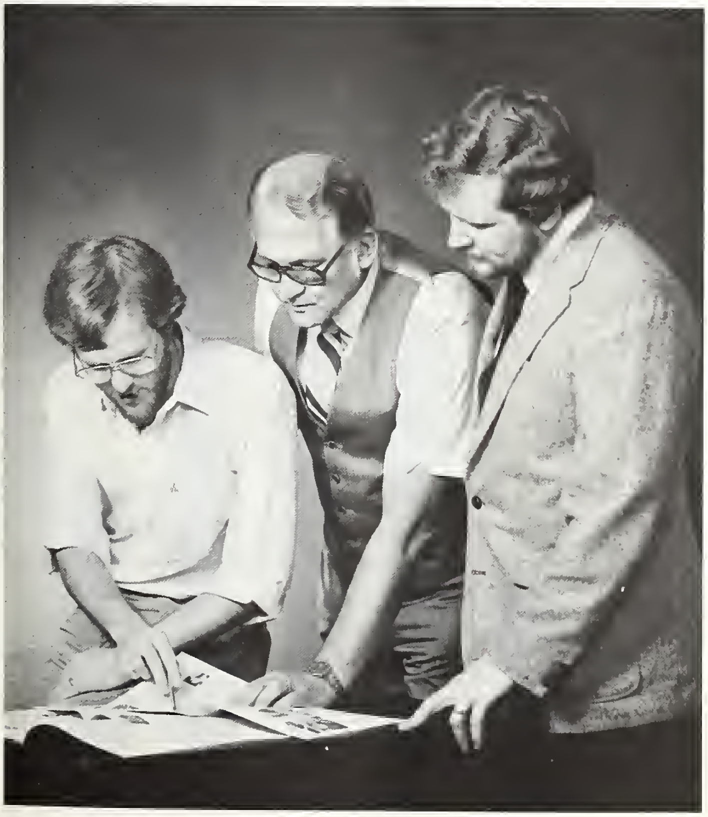
What are the goals of the news service for the next triennium? To improve the gathering of news from the local level (a high percentage of the print service still deals with institutional news). To explore ways in which the electronic media can be used in telling the General Conference story. To glorify God by continuing to tell the story of his people in an open, forthright and responsible manner. *Larry Cornies, news director*

The Mennonite

The 1980-83 triennium has been historic for *The Mennonite*. Having set ourselves—the communications committee, General Board, several congregations and staff working together—a current philosophy and objectives, we did one of the most thorough research projects ever done to a church paper. With the aid of research and computer expertise, data was gathered from over 1,800 readers of *The Mennonite*. Their input was interpreted and related to the philosophy and objectives.

Take a 1980 edition of *The Mennonite* and compare it with a 1983 edition. Changes are obvious: regular Bible, personal/together, local/global pages, regular use of a second color, new cover logo, more informal layout and print style ("ragged right") and a 24-page, every-other-week issue versus 16 pages 46 times per year.

The Mennonite staff (from left): Gordon Houser, editorial assistant; Bernie Wiebe, editor; Larry Cornies, associate editor



In my acceptance of the editorship in 1976, I pledged three things: (1) to work for an overtly biblically centered paper, (2) to make it relational, i.e. connect with our everyday lives, and (3) to build on the familial idea of the General Conference, i.e. to include all parts of our conference in sharing and dialoguing over our common ministry and targeting *The Mennonite* to minister to the total GC family.

As we all know, this is an impossible, never-ending task which all former editors also had to face. But that is the good news of Jesus Christ—he makes the impossible possible. He makes "red as crimson" into "white as snow." He brings peace that passes human understanding in a world that harnesses its best human understandings to create destruction and oppression.

The Mennonite today has circulation of 14,836 compared to 16,188 in 1974 and 16,392 in 1962. We always gain some new readers but also lose some.

Of course, we'd like to see each GC member receive *The Mennonite* and read it. We are convinced this would enrich our GC spiritual family. It is regrettable that some of our family prefer not to know about or to share with their larger spiritual body. Let us continue together to pray and to seek ways to trust one another more and to eagerly learn and share together.

On the other hand, we are grateful to God for his special blessings upon *The Mennonite*. Over these last years dozens of Christian publications have been discontinued. Many more have lost readership; only a few report gains. God's Spirit has guided. We have held a good circulation in spite of fast changing times—theologically, politically, economically and socially. The credit belongs to God's mercy and grace.

I believe in the 98-year tradition of *The Mennonite*. In 1985 it will serve its 100th year. It has been an essential part of the General Conference all these years. Each GC member needs *The Mennonite*, and *The Mennonite* needs each GC member.

Our commitment is to help "proclaim the wonderful acts of God, who called you out of darkness into his own marvelous light" (1 Peter 2:9b TEV). Please pray for us and with us that the Holy Spirit may work in us all and through us all to the glory of God and his kingdom. *Bernie Wiebe, editor*

Der Bote

Der Bote is continuing an important ministry to German-speaking churches and German-speaking members of churches in North America, particularly in Canada. *Der Bote* keeps these readers informed about General Conference and inter-Mennonite matters and acts as an information medium for local church, community and family happenings. A vital service is performed by *Der Bote* by serving as a communications link between the churches in North and South America and Europe, particularly West Germany. The circulation is holding its own at about 7,000 subscribers, roughly 5,000 in Canada and the remainder in the United States, Mexico, South America and Europe. All editorials, typesetting and layout work is done by *Der Bote* staff—editor Gerhard Ens, editorial assistant Heide Harms, and secretary Shirley Thiessen. The printing and mailing are done by Derksen Printers, Steinbach, Man. *Gerhard Ens, editor*

Ministerial Leadership Services

New Ventures

Pastor/spouse study rotation offers pastors personal growth and professional development through three weeks of study and inspiration during the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries January interterm and the annual ministers' workshop. Since January 1981, 83 people have participated. Five-way financing—individual, congregation, district/province, seminary and General Conference—makes expenses manageable.

The Mayslake consultation on "The Shape of the Pastoral Ministry in the '80s" heard 32 pastors and church leaders speak as practitioners to identify needs and project direction for the '80s. Findings have been developed into a resource manual now in the hands of district/provincial ministerial leadership.

Pastoral changes

Leadership changes are carried out with sensitivity and a desire to know and do God's will.

Year	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982
Number of Changes	75	82	41	84	77

Numbering pastoral changes is not always accurate. Sometimes terminations and installations appear as two changes instead of one. Pastoral changes are usually well-considered and in the interest of the congregation, pastor and/or family.

Women are responding to the call to pastoral ministry. Twenty-four are pastoring effectively with strong affirmation from the local congregation.

Pastor Leadership Is Absolutely Crucial

Jacob T. Friesen, director

John C. Harris in a highly respected book titled *Stress, Power and Ministry* states, "In both Roman Catholic and Protestant parishes, the pastor's personal style has always been central, but today his (and now her) personal qualities, ways of leading, knowledge and skill are not just central, they are decisive for the well-being of the local church. In the crisis of adaptation, the role of the pastor is absolutely crucial." Most will agree, but what is an appropriate response? Should the approach be regional or conference-wide? I am convinced that we need to be more intentional in shaping the pastoral ministry in the local congregation. *Jacob T. Friesen*

Preparation of pastors and future leaders Mennonite Biblical Seminary survey date 1981 with 293 responses

Pastor's education	**percent**
Bible institute	36
College degrees	76
Seminary degrees	87
AMBS	44
Other	43
Beyond seminary	35

Role of pastor's spouse	**percent**
Like other members	70
Spouses gainfully employed	38
Unrecognized associate pastor	12
Recognized but not paid	7
Paid for pastoral ministry	3

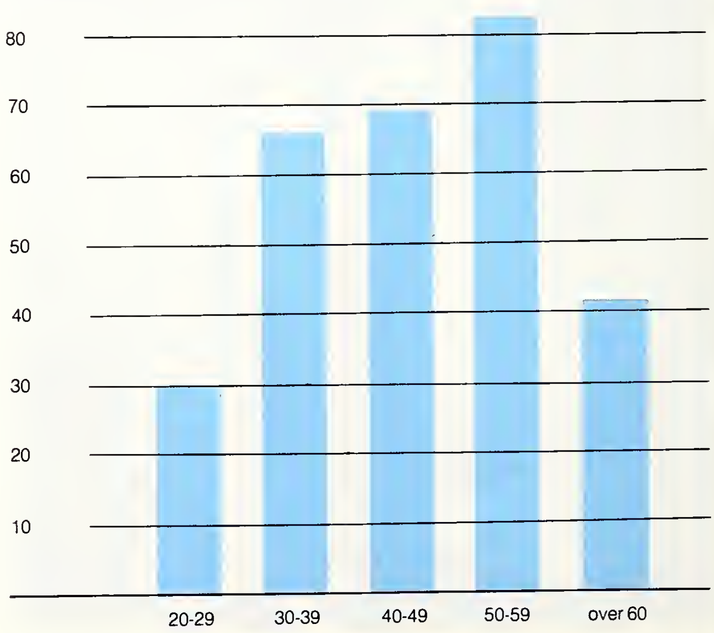
Pastors not raised Mennonite	**percent**
Joined Mennonite congregation	14
before becoming pastor	7
At time of becoming pastor	5
After becoming pastor	2

Anticipated need for pastors	
Replacement (10 years)	206
Additional need (10 years)	282
Foresee woman pastors called (5-10 years)	152

Future source of persons called	**percent**
Within congregation with training	8
Within congregation without training	10
Another congregation with experience	41
Training institution member elsewhere	29

Age of Present Pastors

statistics—pastoral survey MBS 1981



Division of Administration

The General Conference has tried to keep pace financially with new initiatives in General Conference programming. During the past triennium, contributions kept pace with inflation (see chart below), which was something we had been unable to do in the previous triennium. The percent of budget received during the past triennium was 97.4 percent. This is almost exactly the experience of the preceding triennium in which 97.3 percent of budget was received. The trend during 1977-1980 was that in each year the percent of budget received was higher than the previous year; it is somewhat disturbing that just the reverse occurred in 1980-1983. However, much of this trend can be attributed to the general economic conditions in the United States and Canada over this period.

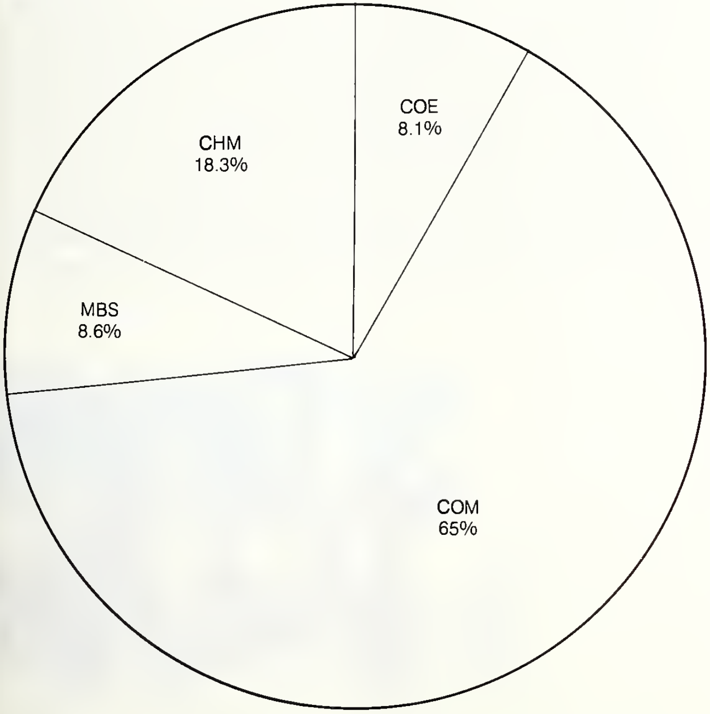
It is encouraging to note that COE and CHM have improved their financial situation through the triennium and now have reached the strong position that COM and MBS maintained throughout the triennium.

An increasingly larger percentage of contributions is received prorated or where most needed rather than designated for a particular commission. This helps undergird the whole conference financially. In 1979, 18.7 percent of receipts were prorated and 6.5 percent of receipts came in where most needed. In 1982 the prorated percentage had increased to 22.3 percent and where most needed percentage to 8.8 percent. This encouraging sign indicates that our constituency wants to see the whole General Conference program move forward together. On the other hand, the majority of contributions are designated to commissions, and tying giving to particular projects still has its benefits.

Year	**Budget**	**Received**	**Percent of Budget Received**
1980	$4,025,190	$4,129,889	102.6 percent
1981	4,609,382	4,521,902	98.1 percent
1982	5,064,530	4,693,600	92.7 percent
	$13,699,102	$13,345,391	97.4 percent

	1979	**1982**	
Budget approved	$3,571,550	$5,064,530	41.8 percent increase
Budget receipts	3,664,725	4,693,600	28.1 percent increase
Cost-of-living index (U.S. CPI)	229.9	292.4	27.2 percent increase

1983 Budget



A major factor in our financial stability is that we have avoided letting disbursements run ahead of receipts. During the past triennium disbursements were approximately 99.4 percent of receipts. The Division of Administration wants to compliment the commissions and seminary for the fiscal control they have exercised during the past triennium.

General Conference changed its fiscal year from the calendar year to a year beginning Feb. 1 and ending Jan. 31. The transition occurred at the beginning of 1983 and went smoothly. This change was due in large part to the fact that the amount of contributions received at the end of the calendar year and the uncertainty of where we were to end up the year financially made planning for the next year difficult. We will now have a one-month period to evaluate with more accuracy where we will end up the year financially and what this means for the next year's budgeting.

Trust Funds

Trust funds are a separate accounting entity under the Division of Administration. Major funds making up the trust funds are the permanent endowment fund, gift annuity fund, emergency reserve trust fund and bequest fund.

The permanent endowment fund contains monies invested and income used according to the expressed wishes of the donor. The corpus of the fund remains intact. Income has been designated for such diversified projects as training Christian writers, providing for a ministerial scholarship fund and providing for the Schowalter Memorial Address at triennial conference sessions. In addition, some portions of the income from the permanent funds are designated to be applied to current commission budgets. The total amount in the permanent endowment fund is $170,228.

The gift annuity fund is the balance of monies donated to the General Conference Mennonite Church on an annuity basis. Semiannual annuity payments are made to individuals at a rate based on their life expectancy. At the individual's death, the original amount donated is distributed to General Conference programs according to the wishes of the annuitant as stipulated in the gift annuity agreement.

The total amount in the gift annuity fund on Jan. 31, 1983, is $172,271. Gift annuities provide an excellent vehicle for a person to make a contribution and at the same time receive periodic income for the remainder of his or her life. Income to the annuitants is partially tax exempt. Land and other appreciated property, as well as cash, can be used to purchase an annuity. Further information is available from the treasurer's office.

The emergency reserve fund originally was equal to 10 percent of the budget of the three program commissions. This fund provides a cushion against an emergency such as the need to evacuate missionaries or an economic crisis that would greatly reduce current contributions. The Divison of Administration has frozen the level of monies required in the emergency reserve fund as of Dec. 31, 1981. The current level of funds is $421,216.

The bequest fund receives money from wills and estates of $10,000 or more. Over a 10-year period, these monies are distributed to the program commission or seminary which has been designated by the donor. This procedure evens out the flow of funds to commissions from these large gifts, thereby aiding the budgeting process. The bequest fund grew significantly from $967,482 to $1,261,646 during the triennium. Over $220,000 was distributed to the commissions and seminary from the bequest fund in 1982. While serving their intended function, trust fund reserves also provide funds which can be borrowed internally during the General Conference budget year rather than needing to borrow from a bank or other outside source. Including the General Conference and other conference-related institutions in their will is an excellent last testimony to the importance of the church in people's lives.

Pensions

The General Conference Mennonite Church has two pension plans for its church workers. Canadian workers are enrolled in the Conference of Mennonites in Canada's plan with Excelsior Life Insurance Company. U.S. workers are enrolled in the General Conference pension plan underwritten by Presbyterian Ministers' Fund (PMF).

General Conference staff and missionaries are automatically enrolled in the appropriate plan when eligible. Participation by ministers is voluntary with enrollment occurring by mutual agreement between the local congregation and minister. Currently only 44 percent of eligible ministers are enrolled in the U.S. plan. This leaves 56 percent, or approximately 120, of the eligible U.S. ministers not enrolled. Some ministers participate in other retirement plans, while others are relying entirely on Social Security. Recent revisions in the pension plan underwritten by PMF have made it a more attractive investment. The plan will be paying 12 percent on funds invested in 1983.

Participation in the pension plan is not mandatory; therefore the ultimate responsibility for a minister's retirement must be assumed by the minister and his or her church. The Division of Administration strongly recommends that each church make the minister's pension allowance a priority budget item and recommends that an amount equal to 10 percent of salary be placed in the pastor's pension plan.

The Division of Administration is also concerned with the retirement needs of past church workers. We have worked with the Commission on Overseas Mission and the Commission on Home Ministries in providing supplemental retirement fund benefits to missionaries who served under the conference boards prior to the time when adequate pension provisions were made. During 1983 at least $80,000 will be required to supplement the Social Security and pension benefits which retired missionaries receive. Our projections are that the need for these supplemental funds will peak in approximately 1987 at slightly over $100,000 per year. Some funds, however, will be required for at least the next 20 years.

Another related concern is the retirement needs of pastors who have served in our conference but who presently have inadequate retirement income. Currently about $30,000 a year is disbursed from the pastors' aid fund to retired ministers and/or their spouses. This fund, however, is limited to those pastors who were at least age 55 before Jan. 1, 1979. *Ted Stuckey*

Stewardship

What does it mean that God is our heavenly Father?

What is the cost when we acknowledge Christ as Lord and Savior?

How can we open our lives to permit the Holy Spirit to teach us true stewardship? Is stewardship of the gospel our prime concern in our individual beings and that of our corporate lives?

As we begin to seek to answer these questions, we are made aware that God is the owner, God is the source. This realization now has implications for all of life. We see ourselves as new creatures with a heavenly Father who is not only able but wants to supply our every need. Our view of creation begins to change as we see God's earth as a gift from his hand. As his gift we cannot go about destroying it on a daily basis or continue to build weapons for its complete destruction.

Mennonites have been known for hard work and frugality. Simple lifestyles and careful use of our resources have not only been a part of our theology, they have also been essential ingredients for surviving the difficult times that are a part of our history.

However, many of us have come into a new time. Even though inflation and other economic problems are part of our lives, we have more than ever before. More time because of an elevated standard of living and labor-saving devices. More talents because of higher levels of education and access to new technologies. More money, beyond that required for the basic week-to-week necessities of life.

Real stewardship, therefore, is not "business as usual." It requires a recognition of God's special and generous gifts to us. A new mindset with new priorities and new goals is in order.

It is to this cause that the stewardship office wants to be a resource center. As stewardship director I want to be able to help individuals and/or congregations make new discoveries and journey with you as we find new truths. God has appointed us to be stewards, managers of his marvelous gifts.

God wants us to become as little children. Therefore my first work was to come up with a five-Sunday "Money Manage-

STEWAR
The Ne

ment Program for Children." This program is to be used by pastors on Sunday mornings. We have two dozen sets of cassette tapes providing pastors a springboard from which to operate. The tapes are heavily booked.

I find my work with congregations on Sunday mornings plus several evenings for seminar purposes challenging and exciting. Seminars on effective use of time and talents, and learning to use the 90 percent which we sometimes claim to be ours make for interesting learning. I also visit with people on a personal basis to talk about wills and estate planning.

Ray Frey, stewardship director

It is my belief that Mennonites are creative people. We can together discover the joy of giving. Each person has a need to give because we are made in the image of God. God gave much. Can we together discover that stewardship is God's gift to us? What kind of excitement could this bring to our lives? Many are discovering the joy of being a faithful steward. Can you help broaden the base? *Ray Frey*

Church Extension Services, Inc.

Church Extension Services, Inc., is a separately incorporated subsidiary of General Conference. CES borrows money from individuals and churches and lends that money to churches and other church-related organizations for church buildings, parsonages, retreat grounds, etc. Approximately 70 percent of the loans are made in North America, while 30 percent of the loans are made to churches in Asia and Latin America in conjunction with the work of the Commission on Overseas Mission. Most of the North American loans are to churches and other church-related organizations in the United States. A few loans have been made to churches in Canada in consultation with the Conference of Mennonites in Canada.

In the past triennium the amount of money loaned to CES by churches and individuals has increased from approximately $320,000 to $715,000. This large influx of new funds has enabled CES to keep up with the demand for loans from new churches that have begun as a result of the church-planting efforts by CHM and district conferences. Money is loaned to CES at 6 percent interest for one-year certificates and 7 percent interest for three-year certificates. The money is then loaned to churches at the rate of 8 percent. The 8 percent rate is guaranteed for five years and then renegotiated.

SHIP

Ethic

Chapinero Mennonite Church, Bogota, received a loan from CES to help make possible a new facility.

Loan activity during the last triennium was as follows:

Year	Loans Made	Amount
1980	Cuauhtemoc, Mexico	$10,000
	Chapinero Church, Colombia	25,000
	Fernheim, Paraguay	40,000
	Grace Community, Chicago	80,000
	Koinonia Fellowship, Chandler, Ariz.	40,000
1981	Chapinero Church, Colombia (by COM)	32,000
	Good Shepherd Church, Sioux Falls, S.D.	50,000
	Washington, D.C. Community Fellowship	50,000
	Zion Mennonite, Souderton, Pa.	12,000
1982	First Mennonite, Clinton, Okla.	35,000
	Fort Collins, Colo.	40,000
	Southeast Iowa Mennonite Camp Association	25,000
	Washington, D.C. Community Fellowship	25,000

In 1983 two loans have been approved for a total of $105,500 (Vancouver Chinese Mennonite Church—$81,500; First Mennonite Church of Champaign-Urbana, Ill.—$24,000). Monies have also been set aside to lend to the San Francisco Chinese Church ($40,000) and for purchase of a missionary residence in Hong Kong ($50,000). An additional loan of $25,000 to Southeast Iowa Mennonite Camp Association has been approved but has not been disbursed since it is not yet known if the funds will be needed. Furthermore, a loan of $50,000 to the Burns Lake, B.C., congregation is contingent upon the approval of an additional loan by Conference of Mennonites in Canada.

The request by churches for loan funds is continuing strongly. CES offers a unique opportunity to invest money and build up the church at the same time. We encourage you to take advantage of this opportunity to help other churches.

Following is an abbreviated balance sheet as of Feb. 28. *Ted Stuckey*

Assets		
Cash	$ 1,107	
Savings	480,189*	
Accrued interest receivable	17,074	
Notes receivable	629,939	$1,128,309
Liabilities and fund balances		
Notes payable	727,521	
Interest payable	4,142	
Contributions for loans	296,740	
General fund	99,906	$1,128,309

*Includes funds of $270,500 for loans approved and/or monies set aside for projects but not yet disbursed.

Commission on Overseas Mission

"Building on the Foundation"

The history of the world mission of the church is one of "building on the foundations." Paul the apostle acknowledged that ". . . God has already placed Jesus Christ as the one and only foundation and no other foundation can be laid" (1 Corinthians 3:10 TEV). The last command of Christ in the Great Commission is often considered the basis of the missionary movement. While true to an extent, a more complete groundwork lies in the very character of the Triune God. God the Father sent his Son. Jesus Christ is sending his church in the power of the Holy Spirit to proclaim the universal gospel to a world of universal need. This foundation is the mission of the faithful church.

Scripture also instructs the church as a people of mission to ". . . be careful how (they) build . . . some will use gold or silver or precious stones in building on the foundation; others will use wood or grass or straw" (1 Corinthians 3:10, 12). There is a danger of inadequate building methods and materials.

The history of the world mission of the church is strewn with the debris of shoddy methods and cheap materials used in the construction process. At times the mission of the church has been based on cultural superiority, pity for the needy, denominational survival and personal empires. These are surely inadequate and shaky. But if the foundation has been unstable, so has the building process. At times world missions have withered as the church occupied itself with self-serving tasks and lost its nerve in the face of persecution, cultural and religious relativity and the aggressive resurgence of other world religions

After the remarkable initial expansion, the Christian church entered a long period of inertia paralyzing world mission building. A significant fact of church history is the recovery of the missionary vision in the 16th-century Anabaptist movement. This recovery, however, was short lived. Persecution and an inward focus halted mission endeavor. Protestant churches finally recaptured the missionary vision in the 17th century, and Mennonites belatedly joined in once again.

The General Conference Mennonite Church was born over a century ago partially out of the solid conviction that world mission is a central task for the church. Some have strongly suggested that world mission has served as a cohesive factor for keeping the General Conference together during its 123-year history.

Building in the '80s will involve personnel. Well over 800 people have served in the world mission of the GCMC since its beginnings. Each of these "builders" came with a deep sense of conviction and unique gifts trained and developed for involvement in missions. They were not super-spiritual giants with proverbial halos but down-to-earth followers of Christ willing to give of themselves so that others might find life in Christ. Some have literally given their lives so that others may live. Some have accepted great risk and sacrifice as part of their commitment. Some have been a disappointment to themselves and to the church.

The 1980 General Conference mandate for COM to increase its missionary team to 175 by 1985 will mean a continued need for personnel with a clear commitment to Jesus Christ and his church. As the Holy Spirit calls and commissions Christ's followers for world mission service and as the church responds faithfully, this goal can be met.

The builders involved in world mission include more than the missionaries sent to the 15 countries in which COM is working. An actively committed home church is indispensable and integral to world mission. If world mission is for the whole church and not just a hobby for an elite few, then each member of the GCMC must have meaningful involvement. The Overseas Prayer Directory has proved an excellent resource for individual, family and church participation in intercessory prayer for the missionary team and the overseas ministries.

Footwashing, India **(Inset) Commissioning Hugh and Janet Sprunger for Hong Kong assignment**

Faithful giving from all congregations, individuals and mission groups is deeply appreciated as strong support for COM is experienced yearly.

Mission program in the '80s requires appropriate methods and quality materials. Missionary preparation for cross-cultural ministry is a costly imperative. Spending years and thousands of dollars to develop an adequate biblical-theological base, skills in cross-cultural communication and professional competence in one's area of service is an investment that cannot tolerate shortcuts. The hurried, overly anxious missionary without adequate preparation is often more of a liability than an asset.

Missionary methods have been changing over the decades. There is always the need to assess effectiveness and faithfulness to the biblical understanding of mission. No longer can missionaries act as masters fully in charge of mission activities. National churches and their leadership expect missionaries to be responsible servants in partnership.

Increasingly COM is involved in building with other missionary sending agencies. Teamwork among missionaries, between national churches and mission agencies is imperative. Costly duplication and a warped witness caused by denominational idolatry cannot be tolerated. COM will continue to cooperate with other Mennonite mission agencies so that the exporting of confusing denominational distinctions can be avoided. COM is working with other Mennonite mission agencies in Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Hong Kong, Japan, Lesotho, Mexico, Transkei, Upper Volta, Uruguay and Zaire. Missionaries will also continue to work together as teams rather than in isolation.

The goal of making disciples involves selecting methods suitable to the cultural context. Evangelism and church planting must be done in culturally sensitive ways. Leadership training cannot assume the model of a single pastor fully paid and full time because most national churches are unable to support it. The model itself is questionable biblically. Healing, caring and educational ministries must continue to play an important role as we share the whole gospel to the whole world.

Building must always be in the context of our world situation. Pressures facing missions in the '80s arise not only from within the church and its understanding of mission but also from the world context. Responsible mission must address itself to issues such as the affluent missionary in a world of tragic poverty, liberation movements in contexts of political, social and economic injustice, resurgent world religions, and the perennial problem of the church-and-state relationship.

COM continues to build on the foundations in Latin America, Africa and Asia. In the reports which follow, more detailed descriptions will provide insight into the building process. *Erwin Rempel*

Africa

A tremendous amount of construction is taking place in today's Africa. Cities change their skylines regularly. The surrounding countryside is soon covered with new suburbs, chaotic though they may be. Whether modern high-rise offices, impressive hotels, simple cement block shops or ramshackle hovels, building proceeds with only temporary cutbacks from sagging economies.

Africa is often plagued by shortages of skilled manpower or unavailability of essential materials. Many projects stand waiting for cement, cement that may be abundant in warehouses but does not get transported to the site of construction. Often strategic supplies are diverted to projects less essential to the needs of the larger community. Prestige and power hinder the practical response to needed development of the economy or society. Similar dangers threaten the spirituality of the Christian church in Africa today.

God is in the building business too. Christ Jesus promised to establish the church, and he is keeping his word. Jesus became the cornerstone. Across the world's longest continent the church is growing.

Within a generation of the death of David Livingstone, Mennonites were converting concern into action. The first missionaries (serving with existing agencies) were sent to East Africa by the first decade of the 20th century. Styles and strategies were applied in different ways. Before 1910 those first workers returned to the handful of sending churches suggesting that Mennonite churches form their own organization. By 1912 two Mennonite groups decided to cooperate in sharing the gospel in south central Zaire. The Congo Inland Mission was born in the heart of the United States to send missionaries to the heart of the Kasai River basin south of the mighty Congo. Some of these original congregations later became part of the General Conference. Since the 1940s all of the General Conference mission work in Africa has been conducted in cooperation with several other Mennonite groups in the partnership now called Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission.

Establishing the foundation with limited tools, meager resources and remote counsel from the sending churches, those early pioneers struggled against great obstacles. They related to four main tribal groups. Using two major languages in the first generation, the living stones were shaped. Fervent bush evangelists teamed with North American missionaries. Simply taught teachers, using limited curriculum, taught others. Basic Bible lessons from those first translated portions became important additions to the cornerstone of faith. And contrary to the predictions of many mission experts, the building began to take shape. Stone upon stone, each made alive by new creation, began to fit together into a living habitation of the Spirit. By the 1980s, 40,000 members in hundreds of self-governing congregations were calling themselves Mennonite.

Occasionally cracks appear in the walls. Corners have not always been aligned. But the base is sound. The process is not yet complete. Construction continues and skills of blending and shaping according to the master plan are still needed.

COM's involvement in Africa continues to be carried out through AIMM. COM as the largest cooperating denomination in the partnership provides approximately 70 percent of the personnel and resources. In Zaire this involvement strengthens the Mennonite churches as they search for understanding of what it means to be both Mennonite Christian and Christian African.

The migration to urban centers requires creative partnership in urban ministries. Leadership training needs increased resources to fill the gaps created by rapid expansion of the Christian fellowship. The exciting and encouraging youth renewal, with its emphasis on evangelism and outreach, necessitates careful discipling of new believers without stifling the zeal and joy characteristic of the movement. Means must be found to encourage and collaborate with the Zaire churches in their own mission outreach across cultural, linguistic or geographical barriers.

The building in southern Africa is often on the groundwork laid by others in earlier generations. Yet the shape of the construction today takes new direction as emphasis is placed on Bible teaching and leadership training. Among diverse forms of African Independent Churches the Word of God may prompt some remodeling of the structures. It must be done with care; it must not reject the design just because it differs

Rondavel, Lesotho **(inset) Worship service, Upper Volta**

Voltaic Christian consulting with missionary Dennis Rempel

from what mission or missionary may have desired. The blueprint of the Scriptures must shape and direct, not Western academic forms nor historic Mennonite cultural styles.

Economic, political and social tensions of the regions must not destroy the hope and truth that the church represents. Workers who relate to the Spirit's construction and reconstruction in lives and nations must be willing to lay aside prejudices and preconceptions while never abandoning the "faith once delivered to the saints." Impulsively jumping to conclusions as to how previous generations should have carried out their tasks must not become an excuse for lack of compassion or integrity in relating to those God is bringing together. The church must be a living testimony of the triumph of God's love, righteousness and peace in a world divided and feeling threatened from many sides.

In Botswana, Lesotho and the Transkei, we respond to invitations for help. The churches cannot be credited to our efforts nor are tied to us by common history. Whether among African Spiritual Churches or in the cosmopolitan life of the international communities, workers go to serve and share with believers built on the same foundation.

In Upper Volta the groundwork is just being laid. An area previously unaffected by the impact of the gospel or living church is now seeing the first demonstrations of life in Christ as the AIMM team lives among these "unreached peoples." Language barriers prompted the strategy of linguistic and literacy emphases. People with skills and training are just beginning to penetrate languages of several tribal groups in order to make God's Word available in a written form of the mother tongue. Missionary linguists will continue to be needed for the years ahead if the walls of the living church are to develop. A handful of national Christians is already available as part of the transcultural witness. The presence of God is slowly rising above a bleak spiritual horizon of ritual and fears, a witness to the power of transforming love.

What a tragedy it would be if just at the time the scaffolding and trained workers are in place, shortages of resources would delay the construction of a living temple for the loving God on the continent of Africa. What a loss for the cause of Christ worldwide if the blueprints were not continually followed by the sending, sharing church. What a waste if wavering faith were to declare a partially finished building sufficient and thus lay down the tools and quit. The years to come may prove to be the greatest period yet in the life of God's people on the bright continent. *Bob Gerhart*

Asia

The vast continent of Asia experienced some exciting as well as traumatic changes during the past three years. China has opened its doors to thousands of tourists and has permitted some of its people to study abroad. India's social and economic problems have made world headlines. Hong Kong and Taiwan face political and economic uncertainties. Japan continues to advance in the field of technology. Other countries in Asia experience extreme hardship due to political or social unrest. In most Asian countries, Christians account for only 1 to 5 percent of the population.

India

The first two missionary couples representing the General Conference Mennonite Church arrived in Bombay, India, on Dec. 9, 1900. For almost a year they traveled on foot, by oxcart and by train searching for a place where they could begin their work. When some land was finally offered to them, each family began the tedious task of acquiring bricks and lumber and finding someone to assist them in constructing a house.

Before structures were up, the poor and the sick were already asking for help. The missionaries extended their arms of compassion and thus began a ministry to lepers.

The first convert was a leper, and the next to be baptized were four orphan girls and eight boys, some of whom were left orphaned because of a famine.

From these beginnings developed two large hospitals, three high schools, a number of elementary schools and a growing church.

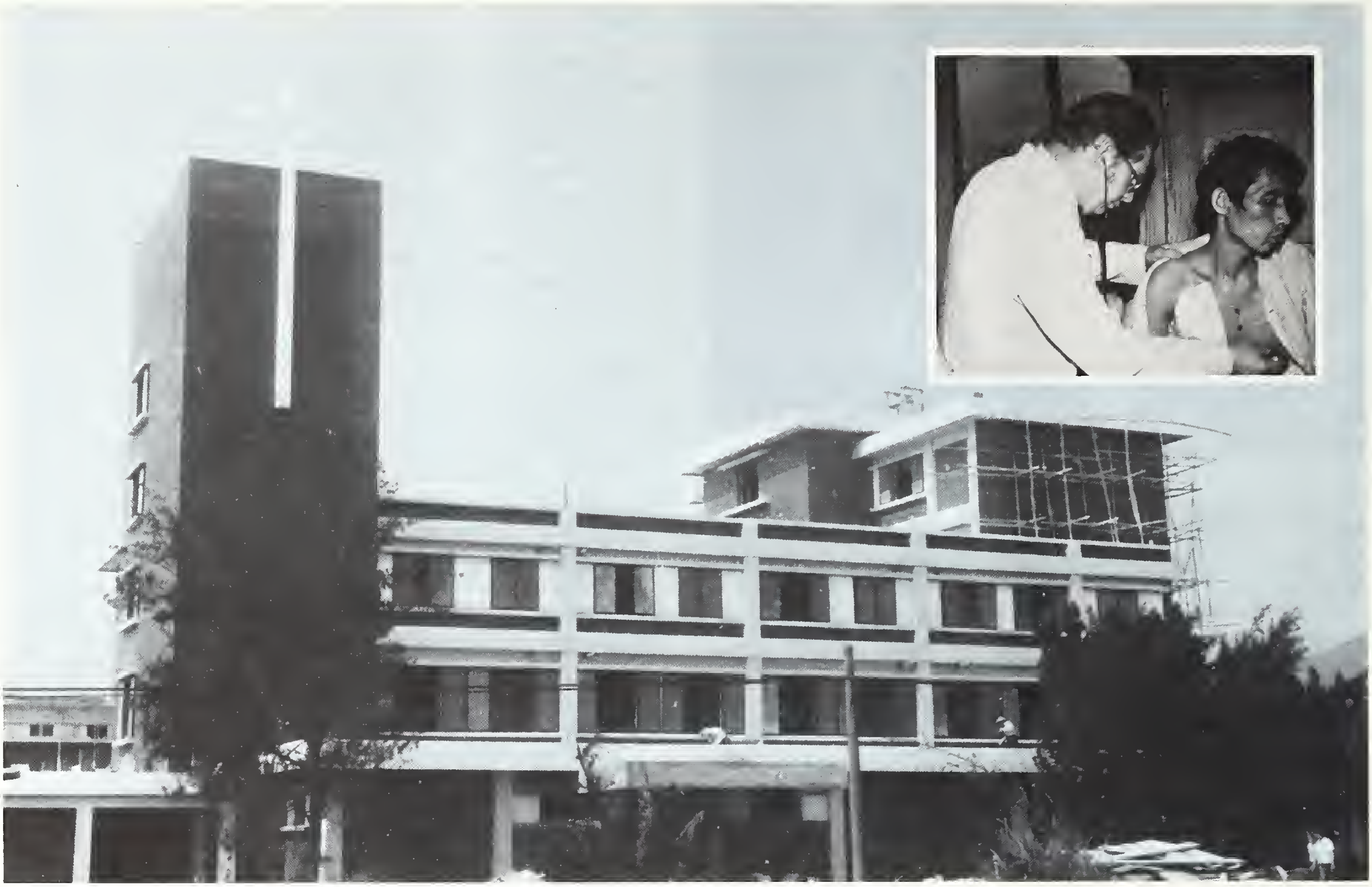
The church grew dramatically at first but has experienced slow growth during the past few years. The anti-conversion law and the complex social issues make evangelism and church planting difficult.

Leadership training continues to be a crucial need. During the past three years, 10 young people have graduated from Union Biblical Seminary and are giving leadership in Christian education and pastoral ministries. COM continues to provide personnel and financial assistance to UBS. During the last two years COM has contributed $45,000 to assist in the construction of the new UBS campus.

China

The work in China was begun by missionaries who were first denied mission board support. Henry J. and Maria Brown worked in China for five years before the mission board

Sewing for Asha Handicrafts Program, India



Mennonite Christian Hospital, Taiwan **(Inset) Dr. Roland Brown examining patient, Taiwan**

agreed to take responsibility for the work. It was another full year before another couple was sent to assist them.

In spite of continual political turmoil, the church grew so that by the year 1941 there were 24 organized congregations. The missionaries also established 60 schools, a Bible school, a hospital and a nursing school.

The work was interrupted, first by the Japanese army and later by the Communist forces. Some missionaries left during the early 1940s, some were taken as prisoners of war, but all were forced to leave by 1951.

During the cultural revolution all the churches were closed, Bibles were burned and Christians experienced severe hardship. For more than 20 years little was known about the plight of the Christians in China. Today it is reported that there are more than 15 million Christians in China worshiping in the 400 "open" churches and many home meetings.

Although people are not permitted to return to China for church-planting ministries, teachers are urgently needed to teach English in the universities and colleges.

Japan

When the missionaries were forced to leave China, one of the missionaries, William C. Voth, stopped in Japan to explore the possibilities of beginning work in that country. One year later (1951) 10 missionaries were sent to Japan.

The missionaries agreed not to establish institutions or construct large buildings for the church in order to avoid the mistakes made in China and India.

A solid beginning has led to 12 independent churches today which constitute the Japan Mennonite Christian Church Conference. In addition, there are four churches in Tokyo which relate to both the Mennonite Board of Missions (Elkhart, Ind.) and the Commission on Overseas Mission.

Taiwan

The foundation for the work in Taiwan was laid in 1948 by MCC personnel who were forced to leave China.

In addition to their regular assignments, some of the MCC personnel also conducted Sunday school classes and worship services. In 1953, MCC urged one of the participating Mennonite groups to assume responsibilities for the work in Taiwan.

The mission board, faced with an urgent appeal to provide personnel and funds for church planting, finally decided to accept this challenge.

Today there are 16 Mennonite churches in Taiwan, a 150-bed hospital, an elementary school and a school for mentally handicapped children.

Hong Kong

Events in China following World War II resulted in MCC joining other Christian organizations in Hong Kong to meet the needs of refugees from China.

When the need was no longer urgent, a new crisis emerged in Vietnam. Some of the missionaries from the Eastern Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities who had been serving in

Vietnam were sent to Hong Kong. When it became evident that their return to Vietnam would be impossible, the decision was made to begin work in Hong Kong.

COM was invited to join the EMBMC in this ministry. Four couples, two from each of the participating boards, are now seeking to establish churches in this city of 5 million people. Meetings are held in the same rented apartment which served as a soup kitchen for MCC. Efforts are being made to purchase a building which will serve as a church and service center.

The call to serve in Asia has come in various ways. Proclaiming the good news that Jesus Christ has come into the world was and continues to be the central task. Closely related to the task of preaching and teaching has been the work of compassion, seeking to meet the needs of the sick and the outcast, the orphan and widow, the destitute and those who are unable to help themselves.

The groundwork in each country has been laid. Various structures have been erected. During the past few years some of these have been demolished, some remodeled and others are in various stages of reconstruction, but the base remains strong. *Peter Kehler*

Latin America

Though many of the political, economic, social and spiritual foundations in countries of Latin America show signs of deterioration, the Mennonite church is increasingly showing signs of the strength of its base. Praise God for nationals and expatriates, past and present, whose faith and efforts have built on Jesus Christ, the cornerstone. Nevertheless, the church of Latin America struggles with its own identity and with its organization and growth. The church struggles with its own leadership and mission as it seeks to edify the people of God and reach out to others.

COM's involvement in Latin America began after World War II. North American Mennonites sensed the importance of relating to geographical as well as cultural neighbors. In the political realm, World War II had shown that Latin American governments were North American allies. This friendliness plus the obvious relationships that had developed turned the eyes of North American Mennonites southward. Spiritual vacuums in nominally Christian nations challenged us. Immigrant, ethnic Mennonites in numerous countries also beckoned us to Latin America.

In each of the countries where COM is present there are distinctive features of past and present developments that indicate the use of available resources.

Bolivia

Efforts to begin a Hispanic Mennonite church in Bolivia began in 1970 with the participation of a student from Uruguay and an Argentine couple. MCC was present with volunteers working in rural areas near Santa Cruz. COM entered the picture with missionaries in 1973. The Mennonite Board of Missions of Elkhart, Ind., also participated in the church planting efforts in various ways prior to sending a missionary couple in

Mennonite Center, Bogota, Colombia **(inset) "The Light" Christian Bookstore, Mennonite Center, Bogota**

Gary Loewen leading communion service, Brazil

1979. Evangelism was emphasized and several groups of believers formed small rural churches.

The combined work of sharing the gospel by word and deed resulted in a small Mennonite church of aroound 100 members. In recent years the matter of leadership development was found lacking and along with other factors led to a crisis of identity and organization. At this writing, however, there are encouraging signs reflected by missionaries and one well-trained Bolivian who stands as a pillar in the Bolivia Mennonite Church. The brothers and sisters of the Bolivian constituency also sense a new purpose as they participate in mission strengthening the structures with new vitality.

At the same time a missionary couple is teaching New Testament and theology at the Bolivian Baptist Theological Seminary of Cochabamba. Their modeling biblical teachings of Christian community according to Anabaptist understandings is contributing to the wider evangelical community.

Brazil

Mennonite structures were established in Brazil already in the 1930s with the immigration of German-speaking Mennonites from Russia. Evangelism and church planting in the Portuguese language were initiated by missionaries from the Mennonite Board of Missions in the 1950s. Church outreach includes a strong literature and bookstore ministry. Since 1975, COM has sent missionaries to Brazil for evangelism, church planting and leadership training ministries while working together with MBM missionaries and Brazilian leaders. Today 26 congregations and a notable group of young leaders are actively extending the gospel to others.

MCC's decade of service in northeast Brazil has opened the door for some new Mennonite churches in that area. COM recently sent a missionary couple to work in Recife with a Brazilian Mennonite couple in evangelism and church development.

Colombia

Of the countries where COM is currently involved in Latin America, Colombia is the only one where there are no immigrant ethnic, German-speaking Mennonites. The Spanish-speaking Mennonite church was established in the late 1940s. The ground was hard, and persecution hindered the initial growth of the church. Today, however, the Colombian Mennonite Church is composed of 11 congregations led by national leaders. COM missionary involvements now are principally in areas of leadership training and development. The Mennonite Center of Bogota, dedicated in 1982, is being called the "work nerve" of the Colombian Mennonite Church as it houses various entities offering spiritual, educational, physical and administrative resources.

Mexico

Among Latin American Mennonite churches many North American Mennonites are best acquainted with the churches in Mexico because they are easily accessible to visitors. Mexico is the only country in Latin America where COM's involvements have been almost entirely with the people and institutions of the German-speaking Mennonites. Since the 1950s, COM has sent missionaries in pastoral, church development roles, in education for children and adults, and in medical services. These involvements have fostered an emerging church that is beginning to catch a missionary vision for church planting among the surrounding Spanish-speaking Mexicans.

The Evangelical Mennonite Mission Conference of Canada is a partner in mission in Mexico.

Paraguay

Paraguay is an illustration of a strong national Mennonite church running its own missionary program for many years. Beginning with immigrant German-speaking peoples in the 1930s, the Mennonite church has grown in its capacities and its missionary vision. Today the Paraguayan church, along with some budget monies from COM totaling only about 25 percent of its annual mission budget, is the channel for mission outreach in 24 places. These efforts include spiritual, educational, medical and agricultural ministries to several Indian groups and to Spanish-speaking Paraguayans. COM provides a missionary couple as well as some monetary aid to the Mennonite Theological Seminary of Asuncion. This school trains workers who share the vision of broadening the Mennonite Church of Paraguay.

Uruguay

Together with immigrant German Mennonites, with Spanish-speaking Uruguayan Mennonites and with the Mennonite Board of Missions, COM has been involved in church planting and leadership development in Uruguay. Budget funds are provided for pastoral leadership, education and literature development. Though COM has no missionary personnel in Uruguay currently, cooperative efforts continue as all participate together in building and strengthening the church. The Uruguayan Mennonite churches also support and manage a children's home.

Conclusion

While Latin Americans face many difficulties and often face suffering and the Mennonites in each country try to be sensitive to the many issues which concern them, notable progress is evident. God has blessed his people in their ministries to each other and to those not yet in the church. Steadily, emerging local leadership is being strengthened. COM is no longer pioneering in mission but participating with national brothers and sisters to build the church whose founder and head is Jesus Christ. To him be the praise.

Latin America is much more than sombreros and siestas, bullfights and bananas. For us it is Mennonite Christians speaking Spanish and Guarani, German and Portuguese, Lengua and Moro, sharing the gospel and participating in the growth of the church. *Glendon Klaassen*

Bob Hull, Commission on Home Ministries secretary for peace and justice, happily updates the "World Peace Tax Fund scorecard" outside his office in Newton, Kan. (right). "Since the beginning of 1983, nine new co-sponsors have been added to the WPTF bill," he said. "Marian Franz, new national director for WPTF in Washington, has brought an astounding level of energy and momentum to our efforts." Hull is currently chairperson of the National Council for a World Peace Tax Fund.

Napier Mennonite Church, Bedford, Pa., will celebrate its 70th anniversary June 24-26. Five former pastors will speak during the weekend event: Jacob Unruh of Jackson, Miss., Leon Detweiler of Largo, Fla., Don Grace of Roaring Spring, Pa., and Willard Claassen and Andrew Shelly, both of Newton, Kan. Some area and Eastern District Conference pastors will give greetings, and several area churches will provide special music. Harold Nussbaum is pastor of the Napier Church.

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dent as the conference's chief administrative officer.

After careful presentation by Richard Bucher of Topeka, Ind., and a discussion superbly moderated by Carol Suter of Pandora, delegates gave unanimous consent (280-0) to the list of 19 printed revisions, plus a handful more that had been presented from the floor. "That's almost worth singing 606 for!" said president James Waltner. (They didn't.)

In business relating to the missions committee, the conference gave approval to a resolution calling for that committee to "cooperate with the Indiana-Michigan Conference of the Mennonite Church in their support of the Great Lakes Choice Books distribution agency." Chairperson Burton Yost suggested to delegates that his committee would come to next year's conference with a request for an operating subsidy for the program.

Leland Harder, CDC church planting consultant, reported on progress made in investigating the possibility of planting a General Conference-related church in the Sarasota, Fla., area. Harder will bring a recommendation to the CDC's council of committees later this year. Chairperson Yost announced that Gary Martin, development director for the Chicago Mennonite Learning Center, will replace Harder as church planting consultant when the Harders leave the CDC in several months.

"1982 was a difficult year," reported Marvin Zehr of Maplewood Church in Fort Wayne, Ind., chairperson of the ministerial committee. "Two pastors resigned because of personal problems, while several others struggled deeply with a variety of issues." Zehr emphasized that pastors need support, both from peers outside the congregation as well as persons from within the church. The idea of providing pastors with an occasional sabbatical, however brief, seems to be a positive one from both congregational and pastoral viewpoints.

Delegates overwhelmingly affirmed the work of conference minister Mark Weidner and extended his term for a second three-year term, with the encouragement that "a sabbatical be worked out in consultation with the board of directors."

During other parts of the business meetings, Jo Ropp reported that she now serves as *The Foundation Series* resource person for the entire Central District (following the resignation of Charlotte Hurst), the Women in Mission organization presented a skit titled "Blessed Are the Piecemakers" by Donna Lehman on the contributions made by women who prepare quilts for sale at various fund-raising events, and the Lombard (Ill.) Peace Center announced it would soon hire its first director.

Bluffton (Ohio) College president Elmer Neufeld spent nearly as much time reflecting on his recent trip to Southeast Asia as he did reporting for the college. In a somber presentation, Neufeld spoke of the dire needs and abuses of human rights he had witnessed there, especially in Kampuchea. "I am filled with gratitude for the fact that our churches and our church schools proclaim a gospel which is not identified by the American flag, but a gospel which is worldwide."

Conference speaker Bruce Yoder, pastor of First Mennonite Church in Richmond, Va., addressed the gathering three times on the theme of wholeness. His stimulating messages were conference highlights for many, as he emphasized the need to discover the incarnated Christ in order to become whole persons and to carry out a wholistic ministry.

Besides the topic of sanctuary for refugees, midafternoon seminars on both Friday and Saturday dealt with topics such as singleness, education, reconciliation, church planting, camping, dating and television. *Larry Cornies*

The life of a pastor isn't easy. Members of CDC's ministerial committee demonstrate that fact as (left to right) Mark Weidner, Barry Hieb, Marvin Zehr and Phyllis Baumgartner try to support a faltering Larry Wilson.

The worship committee for Bethlehem '83 is inviting individuals or groups to provide informal sidewalk music during the week of Aug. 1-7. The local music committee will place such people and groups at various locations to provide music as participants at Bethlehem '83 move about the campus. Those interested may contact Art Isaak, 905 Washington Ave., Sellersville, PA 18960. Please send audition tapes if such are available.

Students at Catholic schools in San Francisco won't be taught ways to survive a nuclear attack, the school board has decided. "To teach children that nuclear war is a survivable disaster is to teach them that nuclear war is an acceptable political or moral option," the board said as it rejected a curriculum proposed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Preparation for nuclear war serves "to condone governmental plans to actually wage a nuclear war," the board said.

An earthquake which registered 5.5 on the Richter scale devastated Popoyan, Colombia, March 31. Over 250 people died in the quake and hundreds more were injured. Colombian Mennonites are sending volunteers to the area to help with the clean-up efforts. The volunteers and financial aid will be coordinated by MENCOLDES, the social arm of the General Conference and Mennonite Brethren churches of Colombia. Mennonite Central Committee has provided $5,000 for immediate relief efforts in the stricken area.

Native rights in Canada: Recent talks achieve 'a beginning'

Ottawa (Meetinghouse)—Canada's top political leaders sat down with representatives of the country's 1.3 million native people in mid-March for a historic conference on aboriginal rights. Their goal was to define those rights and entrench them into an amendment to the new Canadian constitution, but the best they could do was open up the discussion and agree to meet again.

Even that was a major achievement according to most observers at the wind-up to the two days of talks on March 16. Given the many levels of government and native organizations involved, plus the centuries of mistrust and broken promises that have marked Indian and white relations in this country, just getting all parties to the table was an achievement.

Because of their varied involvements with native people, Canadian Mennonites took a special interest in the event. The Native Concerns office and voluntary service programs of Mennonite Central Committee (Canada) provide an important—though often controversial—link with native groups both in urban and remote reserve settings. The Conference of Mennonites in Canada has a Native Ministries program that focuses on church planting among Indians. Other conferences have similar programs on a smaller scale.

In advance of the talks, MCC (Canada) had joined with eight other Canadian church bodies in distributing over 1 million pamphlets explaining why the native groups deserved the support of Christians in seeking justice. The pamphlet was prepared by an interchurch coalition known as Project North. Menno Wiebe, MCC (Canada)'s representative on Project North, attended the Ottawa conference as an observer. Also present were two Mennonite Brethren men involved in politics. Bill Regehr of Winnipeg attended as the principal secretary of Manitoba premier Howard Pawley. Jake Epp, member of parliament from southern Manitoba, took a keen interest in the proceedings as the official spokesman on constitutional matters for the opposition Progressive Conservative party.

While the often-heated debate went on before the TV cameras carrying the event on a live, national broadcast, much of the real work progressed behind closed doors at hard bargaining sessions where officials finally cobbled together a compromise that most could sign.

The final accord, signed by Prime Minister Trudeau, nine of the 10 provincial premiers (French-speaking Quebec declined because it does not recognize the constitution), leaders of the Yukon and Northwest Territories, and Indian, Inuit and Metis chiefs, sets out a timetable and agenda for three more major constitutional conferences. This guarantees that the complex questions of aborginal rights will dominate public debate over Canada's constitution for the next half-decade. It also means that native leaders will be full participants in the discussions—something they have sought for over a century.

Although Canada has been an independent nation for 115 years, it was only in 1982—after decades of wrangling—that Canadian politicians finally agreed to a "made-in-Canada" constitution and Charter of Rights and Freedoms that would cut the last remaining legal ties with Great Britain. The Canada Act, proclaimed in April 1982, contained a general clause guaranteeing the "existing aboriginal and treaty rights" and stipulated that a First Ministers' Conference was to be held within one year to decide what those rights are.

As the start of the conference approached, however, all parties began to worry that the task could not be completed in just two days of talks. The search for an "ongoing process" quickly became a key agenda item.

The final accord fell far short of what native negotiators had hoped for. "We are naturally disappointed," Inuit spokesman John Amagoalik concluded at the final session. "But it's a beginning." *Allan Siebert*

Three key native negotiators at the constitutional talks: (left to right) Chief Solomon Sanderson, George Erasmus and David Ahenakew

Billy Graham, in the March 5 issue of *TV Guide*, warns against the "blurring of the line between politicking and preaching. . . . As Christian evangelists, we should speak out on moral issues, but we should not use our programs to endorse political candidates or causes." He also criticizes an overemphasis on fund raising: "The vast majority of TV evangelists and pastors are moral, ethical and worthy of our trust. However, a minority may attempt to mislead us—or themselves—into believing that God intended all our contributions to be buried in mortar and concrete."

Bluffton (Ohio) College will host its third Elderhostel program June 6-July 2 for the northwest Ohio area. Elderhostel is a special residential academic program for older adults. A network of more than 400 colleges and universities across the nation offer the low-cost, short-term program to people age 60 or older and to those whose spouse or companion qualifies. Information and registration forms can be obtained by calling Don and Nancy Schweingruber at 419/358-8015 or writing them at Bluffton College, Bluffton, OH 45817.

Muslims are counting on Europe becoming Islamic within the next few decades, predicts *Al-Islam*, the "Magazine of Muslims in Germany." West Germany is stated as having 1.5 million Muslims and East Germany, 101,000. The fact that Christianity is no longer taken for granted in Europe and that it is increasingly the subject of criticism and lack of understanding is thought to be opening doors for Islam.

MHA addresses rising medical costs, wellness promotion

San Diego (Meetinghouse)—What are the options when health-care costs become too high for families *and* for governments? How does our faith relate to choices about prolonging life through "heroic" measures? Is it fair and/or wise to leave decisions about genetic engineering, organ transplants and terminating life-support systems strictly up to medical professionals? How can we promote more preventive "wellness" care among people in our churches? What is wholeness?

Crucial questions such as these are becoming common. Containment of government health-care budgets, the growing aged population that requires more than the average health services, innovative potential through the latest technology, health costs which in the United States rose from $160 in 1960 to $1,100 per person in 1980 raise ethical dilemmas which must be faced by health-care professionals together with the people they serve.

On March 18-23 at the third annual Mennonite Health Association meeting held in conjunction with the Protestant Health and Welfare Association here, these and other urgent matters attracted a record 270 registrants to the MHA. At last year's Louisville, Ky., meeting, more people attended in total (because nursing students attended for interviews with prospective employers), but regular registration was about 260.

While some marveled at the large attendance during an economic recession, the active participation in workshops and other sessions on the theme "Choosing Health" soon showed why so many were present.

One highlight was the focus on healing the whole person, addressed in a sermon by Paul Lin, chaplain of Mennonite Christian Hospital in Taiwan. Wholeness was spoken to by Harlan Ratmeyer, director of pastoral services at King's View Hospital, Reedley, Calif., while wellness was explored by Erland Waltner, executive secretary for the Mennonite Medical Association. Mennonite Mutual Aid's new wellness program director, Ann Raber, presented the Wellness Manual for pilot projects MHA plans to run in 20 congregations this next year, and Glen and Marilyn Miller of Bellefontaine, Ohio, shared their experience with running a wellness program in their congregation.

Herman Andres, retired administrator, Newton, Kan.: "We never dreamed of a day when 270 people would attend an MHA meeting."

Some insights expressed in these presentations were as follows: "Too often we are specialists for problems . . . wholeness begins with the givenness of having been created and made whole in Jesus Christ" (Ratmeyer); "the Bible advocates a positive theology of the body which includes an invitation to live human life to the full" (Waltner); "I feel myself urged regularly by families to do what I consider contrary to the goodwill of patients" (Glen Miller).

Because of the realization that responsibility for health care must lie more and more in the people, families, congregations and larger church choices, strong emphasis was placed on the vision for greater congregational and denominational participation in future MHA meetings. To date, four Mennonite-related denominations have named members to the MHA board. Workshops in this area were packed.

Oral Roberts, the Tulsa, Okla., evangelist/healer, addressed the opening joint session of MHA/PHWA. Confessing that his own dream for the City of Faith medical complex owed much to the pioneering work of the PHWA, Roberts repeatedly reinforced the idea that salvation (spiritual ministries) and healing (medical ministries) belong together.

Laban Peachey, Mennonite Mutual Aid minister, reported on the findings of the cooperative "study on ethical and stewardship dimensions of rising health-care costs" carried out over the last two years. "This study tells us we have health choices and we make such choices daily. . . . In medicine there will always be a frontier—always be dilemmas . . . it's not so much our challenge to

(continued on following page)

Bethlehem '83
six-day post-conference
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Tour host: Dr. Bernie Wiebe
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Fifty-four students are expected to receive their bachelor's degrees in either theology or church music as Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg, prepares to graduate the largest class in its history. Menno Epp, pastor of Foothills Mennonite Church in Calgary, will address the graduating class in commencement exercises on May 1.

The vessel "Eastern Pearl" left Vancouver harbor March 9 with a huge shipment of Food Bank wheat for India. With its load of 8,740 metric tons of wheat (320,000 bushels), valued at approximately $2 million, plus $500,000 for ocean freight costs, this food shipment is the largest ever to go to India from the MCC (Canada) Food Bank. The wheat will be used for drought emergency aid response and food-for-work projects; MCC personnel in India will monitor the distribution.

"Africa's Economic Crisis," a paper recently published by Canada's North-South Institute, reviews the trends in sub-Sahara Africa (excluding South Africa and Namibia). It notes that the population in this region has increased more rapidly than elsewhere in the "developing world," that the performance of the region's small industrial sector has increased slightly, but that agricultural output per capita fell by 1 percent per year throughout the 1970s. The paper attributes the decline to low and irregular rainfall and to government policies which have kept prices down for the sake of the many urban dwellers.

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find solutions but to live in ongoing, caring dialogue together about these issues."

Ron Ropp, Mennonite Hospital of Bloomington, Ill., chaplain and president of the PHWA college of chaplains, said in his address to the chaplains, "Roots don't save us but they do provide foundations . . . sometimes our gifts become defenses (ruts) . . . some routes before us are to impact the larger health-care system more toward integrating the spiritual, social and medical care; to challenge local congregations and church leaders in setting proper goals for wholeness in healing and then work together."

All other sectional workshops at MHA—Council for Trustees, Aging Ministries, Developmental Disabilities, Hospitals, Nurses Association, Chaplains Association and a Child Welfare Consultation—reported stimulating encounters to the annual MHA business session.

H. Ernest Bennett, executive director of MHA, was given a citation by the American Protestant Hospital Association (sub-group of the PHWA) for his contributions to the larger health-care field over several decades.

Vernon Neufeld (left) receives a plaque recognizing 15 years of service to Mennonite Mental Health Services as Marvin Ewert, MHA president, looks on.

Marvin Ewert, outgoing MHA president, turned his role over to Erland Waltner. President-elect for the next year is Ronald Litwiller, Goshen, Ind.

As of March 1, MHA had 558 members (495 personal and 63 institutions). The board adopted a goal of 766 members by the end of 1983 (660 personal and 106 institutions).

The 1983 adopted budget calls for disbursements of $33,795.

A moving part of the MHA assembly was a special tribute to Eldon Graber, co-director with Martha Graber of the Inter-Mennonite Council on Aging program, who died suddenly at the beginning of March. Martha was present and plans to continue in this work.

The 1984 MHA convention will meet March 23-28 at Kansas City, Mo., on the theme "Celebrating Hope." *Bernie Wiebe*

Shop manager wanted

Et Cetera Shop of Liberal, Kan., is seeking a full-time volunteer manager (single person or a couple) to oversee the day-to-day operation of an already organized and very successful shop. Some compensation will be available.

Do you work well with people, have an enthusiastic Christian outlook, some managerial skills and can volunteer your time for a year? We need you!

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Mennonite Central Committee and
Mennonite Information Center, Lancaster Cty., Pa. invite you to

Visit Lancaster County July 30, 31

on your way to **Bethlehem '83.**

- **Lodging with Mennonite families,** $3 a night per adult; $1 per child; $1 per person for meals. (Rates set on Mennonite-Your-Way scale).
- **Tours of Lancaster County, self-guided or led by local Mennonite guides.** Guided tours at current Mennonite Information Center rates (minimum rates are $11.50 for 2 hours for cars; $30 for 3 hours for bus tours).
- **Open house at MCC headquarters, Material Aid and SELFHELP centers.**
- **Chicken barbecue at MCC July 31, evening.**

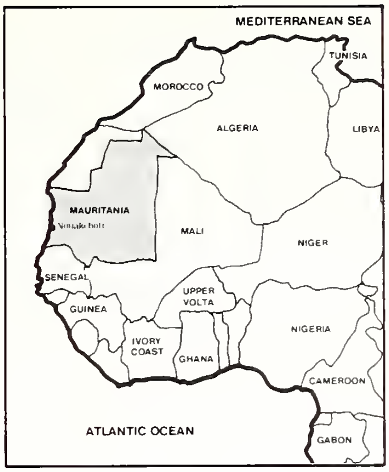
Pre-registration required. For information and registration forms send to Lowell Detweiler, MCC, Akron, PA 17501 USA

Name ____________________ **No. attending** __________

Address ______________________________

In spite of bone-chilling showers and parking fields soggy with the runoff from a heavy spring snowfall, 27,000 people came to the Kansas State Fairgrounds April 9 for the 15th annual Mid-Kansas MCC Relief Sale where, in 24 hours time, they transformed 350 quilts,19 Holstein heifers, four grandfather clocks, two thoroughbred horses, 36,000 fritters, a basketball and thousands of other special gifts into $332,000 to fuel the worldwide poverty rescue programs of the Mennonite Central Committee. The relief sale tripled its usual rate of growth, shooting up from last year's receipts of $250,000.

Mennonite Central Committee will send 1,000 tons of wheat to Mauritania, an impoverished Islamic republic in western Africa, in response to severe drought there. Mauritania (see map at right) is located on the Atlantic coast of northwest Africa, bordered on the east by Mali. Slightly larger than Egypt, it has a population of only 1.6 million people. Repeated droughts in recent years have resulted in a serious decline in agriculture. MCC's activity is seen as a one-time involvement in this country and does not represent the initiation of a new MCC country program.



Judge grants evidenciary hearing in case of non-registrant

Wichita, Kan.—A federal judge here agreed to hear evidence from defense lawyers and said that two federal officials must be brought to Wichita to testify in the case of Charles Epp, who is accused of not registering for the draft.

U.S. District Judge Frank Theis said that Epp's defense lawyers could bring to Wichita David Kline, a senior legal adviser for the U.S. Department of Justice, and Edward Frankle, former director of policy with the U.S. Selective Service.

The two will be called to testify on May 23. After their testimony, Theis will decide whether higher government officials should be ordered to testify, he said in a hearing April 4.

Theis also said he would review in private the government documents defense lawyers want to see but which federal prosecutors say they are reluctant to release.

The trial for the 20-year-old Bethel College (North Newton, Kan.) student from Henderson, Neb., had been scheduled for April 5. But on March 30 Theis told Epp's lawyers that they could present evidence at a pre-trial hearing concerning their motion that the government was guilty of selective prosecution in its case against Epp. By the time the hearing began, however, the judge had postponed jury selection, seeing that more time would be required to properly review the evidence.

At the April 4 hearing, then, Theis ordered the government to turn over to him all documents related to the policy of prosecuting non-registrants. If the government refuses to turn over the documents, he said, then it must say why. He also ordered Kline and Frankle to appear on May 23.

U.S. Assistant Attorney Jack Williams said at the hearing that the government had no objection to having Kline testify, but did object to all others the defense lawyers wanted to have appear, including Frankle. These others included presidential adviser Edwin Meese, U.S. Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger and Selective Service Director Thomas K. Turnage.

Epp is one of only 15 people across the country indicted for failing to register, his lawyers said, while thousands of men have failed to register. The motion being considered by Theis says that the government is selectively prosecuting Epp because he told government officials he would not register. *Gordon Houser*

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Jerusalem—Mennonite Central Committee staff distributed 110,400 olive seedlings to West Bank farmers this past season. The distribution enabled over 3,000 farmers living in 68 villages to plant approximately 1,300 acres, reports Judith Dick of Winnipeg, an MCC worker here. The farmers purchased the seedlings from MCC at a subsidized price.

MCC olive seedlings are distributed in Surif, a West Bank village.

A routine prayer vigil at a missile silo near Camp Mennoscah, Murdock, Kan., on March 3 turned into a minor incident when local authorities interrupted a group of 18 Mennonite Voluntary Service personnel part way through their service. The quiet assembly was a scheduled part of an MVS orientation being conducted at the nearby camp. Volunteers were praying when four county sheriff vehicles and two state trooper cars converged on the scene. Claiming that the Air Force wanted their identities, the officers began taking down names but stopped a few minutes later when they said the Air Force had changed its mind.

RECORD

WORKERS

Shirley Peters, North Kildonan Church, Winnipeg, has begun a two-year term with MCC in Waterloo, Ont., where she will work at the Independent Living Centre for the physically handicapped. She was last employed at a group home for mentally retarded adults. Her parents are Henry and Marianne Peters of Winnipeg.

Chuck and *Bev Regier*, First Church, Newton, Kan., have begun a 13-month term of voluntary service with Mennonite Board of Missions, Elkhart, Ind., serving as program directors for the VS household in Champaign, Ill. Chuck also does community work and home repair.

David Schertz has been appointed administrator of Mennonite Hospital, Bloomington, Ill, effective Jan. 28. He replaces David Ochs.

Instructor/academic dean

Swift Current Bible Institute is seeking applications for the position of instructor/academic dean.

This is a permanent position beginning in the fall of 1983. Candidate must have at minimum a bachelor of theology degree plus one year of education at a Mennonite college or seminary. Three-quarter time devoted to instruction—teaching Old Testament and other areas to be negotiated. Quarter time academic dean—duties primarily curriculum development and relating to faculty on classroom concerns.

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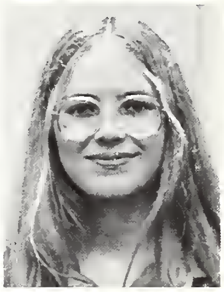
Peters



Schrag

Symons

Upperco

Regiers

Weaver-Grills

Anne Schrag, Salem-Zion Church, Freeman, S.D., has begun a two-year term of voluntary service with Mennonite Board of Missions, Elkhart, Ind., working as a nurse in Carlsbad, N.M. She is the daughter of Erwin and Vera Schrag of Freeman.

Margaret Ann Symons, First Presbyterian Church, Centralia, Wash., began a two-year MVS term on Jan. 1 with the Harvest for America Nutrition Program in Kansas City, Kan. A 1982 graduate of Whitworth College, Spokane, Wash., her parents are Arthur and Glenna Symons of Centralia.

Ann Upperco, Foundry United Methodist Church, Washington, began a one-year MVS term on Jan. 3 as administrative assistant for Good News North of Howard and People's Housing in Chicago. A 1982 graduate of College of William and Mary, Williamsburg, Va., she is the daughter of Jesse and Caroline Upperco of Arlington, Va.

Frances Weaver-Grill and *Peter Grill*, Hively Avenue Church, Elkhart, Ind., have begun a two-year term with MCC in Kenya, where they will work in camel husbandry. They previously served in agriculture and nursing with MCC in Brazil. Her parents are Arthur L. and Mary Jane Weaver of Elkhart.

Ernie Wiens, Glenlea (Man.) Church, joined the MCC (Canada) office overseas department April 1. He will be serving as a local voluntary service worker. He will replace *David Foxall*, who has worked on overseas development project submissions and reporting, material aid shipments and related matters.

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***The Mennonite* staff: (left to right) Larry Cornies, associate editor; Gordon Houser, editorial assistant; Bernie Wiebe, editor**

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On my prayer list

A couple of months ago I wrote a somewhat critical letter to *The Mennonite.* I think it behooves me to also let you know when I appreciate something, as I did the articles on alcoholism a few weeks ago. Also the entire March 15 issue, which, to me, was outstanding. My favorite was the article by Joyce Shutt on Jesus' triumphal entry.

Just one small criticism. I'm afraid the illustrations behind the printing will have made some of it difficult to read for those with defective eyesight. I had some difficulty myself. It looks good and is eyecatching; but in a magazine, readability is primary, don't you think?

As I write this I am reminded that I have no right to criticize someone unless I am willing to pray for them. So right now I have put *The Mennonite* staff on my prayer list. *Elvina N. Martens, M.D., Box 116, Hammon, OK 73650*

March 24

Editor's note: Elvina, we look forward to constructive criticism and counsel because we want to learn. Your point on "readability" is well taken. I have been drawing this problem to the attention of those in charge of the printing.

Of course, compliments are also welcome. And we always desire prayer support from the constituency.

Helps me feel less lonely

Count me among those who read the last page first. I too find its messages refreshing and stimulating. Moreover, I'm particularly grateful when your thoughtful statements help me to feel less lonely with troubling questions or even convictions hard to communicate to others. Such is today's editorial: "What about WCC and NCC?" Thank you for it. *Erna J. Fast, 321 N. Maple, Hutchinson, KS 67501*

March 24

Response about NCC and WCC

I am keenly interested in your editorial about the WCC and NCC (March 15 issue). In my semiretirement I am serving two small rural congregations in the United Church of Christ while retaining my membership in First Mennonite Church in Sugarcreek, Ohio. I told the UCC officials I would always be a Mennonite. I have been given full standing on that basis.

The UCC is active in both the WCC and NCC. I serve on the social concerns committee of the Eastern Ohio Association. In this capacity I attended the Nuclear Freeze Lobby several weeks ago. There were up to 7,000 of us on the west side of the Capitol. I walked to the east side to observe Jerry Falwell and his small gathering, mostly Veterans of Foreign Wars. As I observed him I could not help but think of Annas or Caiaphas at the trial of Jesus. I told him so in a letter. It was a bit disheartening to have President Reagan call us a "fraud."

Last week I spent four days in Washington again, representing the UCC at the Annual Impact Conference. We were there to make an impact on our government. Never have I felt that there are so many foxes tending the chickens. I think we were trying to do precisely what the early Christians tried according to Acts.

I have friends in both the WCC and NCC. Last summer I had a long conversation with Hans Rudi Weber in Geneva. He had just returned from 18 months of keen observation throughout the Third World. The problem is not so much with either the WCC or NCC as it is with the critics. If we want, we can know exactly what either council is about. If we consider their risks bad, then maybe Jesus and Paul didn't exactly take good risks. Isn't much of our difficulty that we tend toward the simplicity of the U.S. president when he sees the whole world as good (us) and bad (them)? We are appalled at what Russia is doing. We should be equally or more appalled at what we are doing in Central and South America and the Philippines. We are too prone to call anything that we don't agree with Marxist-Leninist. The Third World people are unhappy with Russia. But that seems to be the only place where they can get help.

You may be right that we do just as well in being only an observer. I find that wherever I go, always pointing out that I am a Mennonite, that our global work is highly regarded. It bothers me sometimes that as far as I know I was the only Mennonite at either the Nuclear Freeze Lobby or Impact. There could have been a few that I wasn't aware of. I want to say that Mennonite Central Committee's Delton Franz is superb in Washington.

I spend some time every February with our personnel in Jerusalem and Cairo. They are doing incredible work. It is constantly more difficult. Our presence and witness are important. I was able to introduce 55 pilgrims to the Palestine Needlework Shop. In a bit over an hour they spent $1,100.

I know very little about the WAE and the NAE. I have some Mennonite friends who belong who I feel do not understand the Anabaptist background to which I try to be loyal. *William H. Stauffer, Stone Creek, OH 43840*

March 25

NCC, WCC, NAE and WAE

I appreciated your editorial (March 15 issue) on the WCC and NCC, and particularly your counsel to them to tell us about their work and let us be the judge of it against the few projects being criticized.

I believe that the General Conference should be a member denomination of the NCC and WCC, and of the NAE and WAE, if the latter would allow membership in the former.

Such membership would substantiate our doctrinal claim that the church is one and that there is one Lord, one faith, one baptism. It would be a step to fulfilling our Lord's prayer that we be one. It would also be in line with our teaching that the church is a visible body. When we prepare persons for church membership, particularly at baptism, we stress the visibility of the church. The same logic should lead to council membership.

Ethically we need to practice the doctrine we teach and not criticize where we have not dialogued.

Great issues of peace and justice face our world communities. Our representatives should be in the Councils to register our concern that solutions be sought in non-violent ways. I am grateful for John Howard Yoder's presence at WCC meetings in the past. It would be good for such a presence to have member status. *Donald R. Steelberg, pastor, First Mennonite Church, 405 Trease Road, Wadsworth, OH 44281*

March 29

Respect all of life

I had been wondering why the voice of the Mennonite churches was not as prominently heard as that of the Catholic Church. Therefore I was thankful when a letter from MCC (Manitoba) arrived at our church a few weeks ago, expressing concern over a future abortion clinic in Winnipeg and giving opportunity for congregations to be heard.

I am a member of the League For Life of Manitoba and several years ago through their efforts was introduced to the book *Who Broke the Baby?* by Jean Staker Garton. If anyone is unsure of his or her position on the issue of abortion and wants to be better informed, I encourage them to read this book.

However, a word of caution to those of us who call ourselves "pro-lifers." We are all familiar with the commandment "Thou shalt not kill." Few of us are guilty of murder. What this commandment means is, "Respect life." Are we still not guilty? Of course we respect our own lives, but what about the lives of others? Do we seek fulfillment at the expense of others? Are we always seeking to raise our standard of living and ignore the quality of the lives of others? Are we willing to help others realize their potential even at some sacrifice to us? Does it bother us if we have two jobs and others have no job?

As I said earlier, this is a word of caution to the pro-life people of our society. If you and I do not care about the lives of persons outside the womb, we are as guilty as those who do not care about the life of a person inside the womb. *Mary Friesen, Box 9, Gretna, MB R0G 0V0* March 30

Let's retain status

I was surprised to see your editorial on the NCC/WCC controversy, since it isn't directly relevant to Mennonites. One aspect of the controversy is relevant, however, and few people seem to have noticed it. The secular media and the politically conservative critics (including some NAE types) of organizations like NCC don't seem to know what Christianity is all about.

Coverage of the NCC controversy and other religious news events such as the Pope's trip to Central America and the Catholic bishops' discussions of nuclear weapons betrays a mistaken conception of religion. *Time*, for example, reported of the Pope's trip that "the dividing line between religion and politics seemed to have all but disappeared" and that the Catholic bishops were "straying into politics." Christianity, they seem to think, is "spiritual" and totally unconnected with real life, especially with politics.

The greatest mistake of Christians over the centuries has been to let this image become true, to let salvation become solely a matter of life after death rather than of life here and now. The Anabaptists avoided this error with their emphasis on discipleship.

The NCC and WCC have tried to act out discipleship but in sometimes ineffective and politically partisan ways and without an adequate concern for peace and non-resistance. (MCC does it better.) Many NAE groups have no vision of discipleship beyond the simplistic don'ts of personal morality. Mennonites have a special heritage in this area. Let's not lose it, especially not to the tunnel vision and political paranoia of some conservative Christian groups. We need to "retain the right to be a spiritual challenge to both." *John D. Thiessen, 1873 S. Jackson, Denver, CO 80210* March 31

Good advice on alcohol

I would like to express my appreciation for John Drescher's article "This Drug Carries Its Own Evidence" (Feb. 15 issue). In working with youth in various situations, a common question which I am confronted with is, "Is it really a sin to drink alcohol as long as it is not in excess?"

I believe there are too many individuals in the Mennonite church who do not consider the effects of their actions involving drinking. The early Anabaptists were strict biblicists regarding the use of alcoholic beverages. Let each of us once again recover this vision of strict, radical discipleship.

Perhaps *The Mennonite* could also expand on this and carry articles dealing with other areas of our lives which are harmful to the spiritual, emotional and physical welfare of ourselves and others. *Randall S. Keeler, MVS unit, 1223 N. Adler, Fresno, CA 93727* March 31

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84D, July 30-August 14 with Oberammergau (16 days, from Chicago)	Cal Redekop Virgil Regehr
84E, July 30-August 14, economy tour, youth hostels (16 days, from N.Y.C.)	Alice Roth Willard Roth
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The gospel is a winsome weakness

Robert L. Ramseyer

When God wanted to share his love with us, he came as a baby, the weakest and most vulnerable form of humanity, in order to be sure that we would get the message. All through his life, Jesus rejected the power that most of us use daily to protect ourselves and prolong our lives. Near the end when he was confronted by the authorities of his society he had only two alternatives. He could have fled, as he did shortly after his birth, or he could deliver himself into their hands and take the road to the cross.

In Philippians 2 Paul tells us that Jesus gave up all of the resources that he could have called on as the Son of God, and that he entered human society as a servant, as a slave. Jesus was the most vulnerable—the weakest of human beings—as far as human society measures power and weakness.

Jesus not only gave us a message, he also showed us how to share that message. He showed us that his way of sharing the message of God's love is the only way that it can be shared. There is no other way.

It is interesting in looking at the history of the Christian church to see how often we have been terribly concerned to preserve the content of Christ's message as faithfully as possible, worrying over its precise wording, and at the same time how often we have totally ignored his way of sharing it. We seem to believe that while the phrasing of the message is important, it can be shared in any way that seems expedient at the moment. We have treated the gospel as if it were a kind of TV commerical for God's love, as if it were something that we were trying to sell and all we need are better communicating and marketing techniques.

Jesus shared the gospel with us in the way that he did because the content of the message determines the way that it can be shared.

The passage in Philippians also makes clear that when Jesus became a servant he was not just play-acting.

Not only is it difficult to share the gospel from a position of power, Paul goes on to tell us in his first letter to the church at Corinth that to a great many people the message itself is nonsense. It is not something that can be proved, either by scientific evidence or philosophical arguments. The message has no academic status. Sharing the gospel then means being a servant with no earthly authority sharing a message which makes no academic sense.

Sharing the gospel is what I have dedicated my life to. I have tried to be a sharer of the gospel in Japan for many years. I am here in Elkhart to try to help people become sharers of the gospel. But how does sharing the gospel square with being a seminary professor? In what sense is a seminary professor a servant with no earthly authority sharing a message which makes no academic sense?

One of the first things I discovered when I joined the seminary faculty in 1972 was that professors do have power and authority. We can talk about all being equally part of one Christian community, but there is a difference between being on the faculty and being a student. There is a great deal of institutional pressure on students to listen to what professors say, to try to remember and even to try to believe what professors tell them. Outside the seminary I discovered that it made a difference whether I was introduced in a church as a missionary or as a seminary professor. A seminary professor is expected to stress academic respectability, the wisdom of the wise, the understanding of scholars.

In other words, although my job at the seminary is to help to prepare people to be sharers of the gospel, my position seems to contradict what I am trying to do. And this is not merely an apparent contradiction, it is the actual situation. It is the situation not only for seminary professors, but for many pastors and missionaries as well. There are pastors who build up positions of authority for themselves and by their manner seem to say, "You must take seriously what I say because I am your pastor." Is it any wonder that a pastor may find it difficult to share good news? There are missionaries who find themselves in positions of institutional authority when they take up assignments in other countries. Is it any wonder that they are often perceived more as bringers of new religious burdens than as sharers of good news?

For me to help people become missionaries, I not only have to have the theories and the knowledge, I also have to have the experience of being a missionary recently enough that I can still feel what it is like to try to share the gospel from a situation in which there is no way to get a hearing except in the winsomeness of that message itself. And so, after six years in Elkhart, we went back to Japan to take up a church planting assignment there. We went back first of all because we believed that God was calling us to that work. We also went back because we felt that fresh experience was essential if we were going to train servants who would share God's love with others. After four years of sharing the gospel in Japan again, we are more than ever convinced that we did what was absolutely essential, and once again we feel the tension between the call of us all to be servant sharers of the gospel and the institutional structures which seem to belie that which we say that we believe.

So where does that leave us?

As my response I share a paraphrase of Luke 18:24-27: Jesus saw that they were sad and said, "How hard it is for those in authority to share the good news. It is much harder for one in authority, for a seminary professor or the pastor of a church, to share the gospel than for a camel to go through the eye of a needle."

The people who heard him were astonished and asked, "Who then can share the gospel?"

He answered, "What is impossible for human beings is possible for God."

MEDITATION

Walk in the way of the Lord

"Make me to know thy ways, O Lord;
teach me thy paths.
Lead me in thy truth, and teach me,
for thou art the God of my salvation;
for thee I wait all the day long"
(Psalm 25:4-5, RSV).

The image of the Godward life as a journey can be found throughout the Bible, but especially in the Psalms. In the Psalms the activity of the righteous person is referred to as "walking in the ways of the Lord." Psalm 128 begins, "Blessed is everyone who fears the Lord, who walks in his ways." Of course, not all ways are God's ways; there is also the way of sinners (see Psalm 1:1).

Life, then, is not a static state, fixed forever, but a process, a process of moving toward God or away from God.

In the New Testament as well as the Old, the "way" refers to the Godward life. Jesus in the Gospel of John says, "I am the Way" (14:6). The early Christians in Acts (see, for example, 9:2) are called followers of the "Way."

The German word for discipleship, *Nachfolge* ("following after"), preserves this sense of the Godward life as motion toward Jesus Christ, as a process of moving in the direction toward God in which Jesus also moved.

What are the implications of using the "way" as an image of the life of salvation? First, the image of the way is one of action and movement, not a secure staying put. There is no resting in salvation. It is a process of learning and being taught.

Second, the image of the way is one of faith. The future is not clearly known. The one walking in the way depends on God to learn where the way goes and which are God's paths. We learn as we go where to go.

Third, there is an implication that those who are walking in God's ways may be at many different places along the way. Some may have just begun; others are farther along; none has arrived at a place where walking is no longer necessary.

Fourth, the direction one is to walk is "toward the Lord" (see Psalm 25:15). Even though all future paths may not be known, there is a clear direction in which one is to move on this path. Everything along the journey is not relative. The process of becoming, rather than the state of being, is not a matter of being at a destination, but of learning and going in the right direction. It is a matter not of knowing all the consequences of our actions but of acting rightly.

Fifth, Psalm 25:10 gives content to what that right action should be: keeping God's covenant and testimonies (that is, the laws which are witnesses to God's way). Those who do this, who walk in the way, are the recipients of God's steadfast love and faithfulness. Thus, to walk in the way is to be in relationship with God, to be a party to the covenant with God.

The image of the way might be applied to church institutions as well as to individuals. The lives of congregations, seminaries and other church structures are also a process of walking in the way and learning as we walk where next to walk. By looking toward God in our decision making and action, we place ourselves in the "God movement," to use the late Clarence Jordan's phrase. We discover God's paths and walk in them in relationship with God.

We then say, "My eyes are ever toward the Lord, for he will pluck my feet out of the net" (Psalm 25:15).

Lois Barrett

CONTENTS

This seminary issue combines at least three things: (1) a tribute to 25 years of cooperation between our Mennonite Biblical Seminary and Goshen Biblical Seminary in the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, (2) our annual special focus on MBS and (3) the nominations for Bethlehem '83.

MBS is our school and we hope this issue gives each reader some better acquaintance with it. A special thanks to J. Herbert Fretz, coordinator of church and seminary relations, for his editorial help, to Henry Poettcker, current president of MBS and professor of New Testament, to Marlin E. Miller, current president of GBS and professor of theology, to Erland Waltner, profesor of English Bible, to Ross T. Bender, professor of Christian education, to Howard H. Charles, professor of New Testament, to Robert L. Ramseyer, director of the Mission Training Center and professor of missions and anthropology, and to Lois Barrett, senior student in the Master of Divinity program at AMBS, for their contributions to this issue.

Mary Lou Goertzen, Deadwood, OR 97430, donated her beautiful artwork from the live daffodils out en masse around her home at the end of February.

Please take the nominations slate seriously and plan for the August elections.

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EDITORIAL

Leadership and leaders

I did not plan to write consecutive editorials on leadership (see March 29 issue). It happened, I believe, through the leading of God's Spirit. The seminary is where leaders are trained. (I confess I think of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries as *one* even though it is made up of Goshen Biblical Seminary [MC] and Mennonite Biblical Seminary [GC]. And my 1965 degree clearly states I graduated from MBS.) And this issue also contains nominations for the GC Triennial sessions at Bethlehem '83. These people are candidates to lead our conference.

Harry Truman once said, "A leader is a person who has the ability to get others to do what they don't want to do, and like it." Mahatma Gandhi referred to problems along the way in his definition, "To put up with these misrepresentations and to stick to one's guns come what might—this is the essence of leadership."

Tacitus, early Roman historian, held "reason and calm judgments are the qualities of a leader."

Napoleon (d. 1821) believed "a leader is a dealer in hope."

Lao-tse (d. ?531 B.C.), ancient Chinese philosopher, thought "a leader is best when people barely know he exists."

The Bible refers often to leaders and leadership. The New English Bible translates 1 Timothy 3:1, "To aspire to leadership is an honourable ambition."

Leaders stand out in biblical history—Abraham, Joseph, Moses, Joshua, David, Deborah, Esther, Nehemiah, Mary, Peter, Paul, Timothy and many more. These are men and women of God who are unique personalities and perform special roles in fulfilling God's promises.

I agree with a current book, *Paths of Leadership* by Andrew LePeau, that for Christians our greater concern is leadership. LePeau defines leadership as "any influence any person has on an individual or group to meet its needs or goals for the glory of God" (p. 10).

Spiritual growth is not easily defined. It will remain a mystery to a large extent.

But even though leadership is related to position or role (pastor, president, parent, teacher, chairperson), in essence it is function (serving, inspiring, teaching or equipping or enabling, planning, guiding).

My experience is that AMBS in its 25 years of cooperative existence has focused on function. That is one reason it is not too well known in our constituency. We who are graduates don't readily point back at only one person we learned from at Elkhart. AMBS has been a place where God's Spirit is obviously present in the everyday environment (I'm not saying there are no problems).

Yes, my life was deeply touched by Waltner, Dyck, Bauman, Charles, Wenger, Enz, Harder, Lind, Miller, Klassen, Schmidt and Yoder. They were my teachers.

But I caught something at AMBS. When they taught me something fresh (C. J. Dyck used to talk about "aha" experiences) they helped me receive such insights with wonder and gratitude as a gift from God.

Therefore I did not come away from MBS glorifying and praising the people or positions. My conviction and commitment is that God's Spirit is at work on the AMBS campus and my own spiritual pilgrimage was enriched beyond what I can ever repay to God and to those who made it possible for me to study at and graduate from our seminary.

Seminary is a leader. Its people are leaders. Graduates are leaders. People are important, deserving our respect and recognition. Thank you to everyone currently at AMBS as faculty, staff and students. We love you, pray for you and want you among us.

Seminary is leadership. For gifts of trust, forgiveness, understanding more of the unfathomable depths of God's love and the Holy Word, chances to practice preaching and teaching with supervision, exposure to original writings of the past and nurturing care. I thank God, our conference for sharing in AMBS and the AMBS community. *Bernie Wiebe*

Bethlehem '83 nominations

Here is your chance for leadership. Study the nominations and encourage other nominees if you see some needs that they could help with in the conference. All nominations will also be open to the floor. Pray for the elections and discuss them with your delegates. Exercise your gift of leadership. *Bernie Wiebe*

THE MENNONITE

OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST

98:10 MAY 10, 1983

THREE MONTHS TO

BETHLEHEM '83

I am he,
I am he who will
sustain you.
I have made you and I
will carry you;
I will sustain you and I
will rescue you.

I am God, and there is no other;
I am God, and there is none like me.

God gives me

I have long enjoyed the poetry of Ecclesiastes 3: "For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven: a time to be born, and a time to die; . . . a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance. . . ."

Recently I have become more aware of the fundamental truth of this beautiful passage. Our "time to weep" came when it was discovered, somewhat accidentally, that I have a potentially serious malignant condition. We were stunned. But as soon as the word spread, the prayers began and we felt the strength needed to cope. My subsequent visit to a specialist brought encouraging news—the malignancy appears to be inactive at this time. Treatment is not indicated. Our season for weeping and mourning turned quickly to the season for laughing and dancing (thanksgiving and celebration).

A life-threatening illness has made me more reflective about the meaning of life and death. I am forced to consider more carefully the gift of life and what it means to live in Christ. Life and health are gifts to be held in high regard.

To live in Christ is to appreciate how precious life and health are. Life is a gift to be held in trust, to be used according to God's will. I fail or succeed in my stewardship of life in proportion to how convinced I am that life belongs to God.

At times our strong work ethic comes into conflict with this concept of life as a gift to be held in trust. People who would not think of abusing their bodies by ingesting substances that are harmful to health think nothing of working far beyond the exhaustion point, even to the point of sleep deprivation. Is this "living" in Christ?

A friend who just celebrated her 94th birthday by going out to eat and playing a game of Scrabble with her sisters shared her thoughts with me one day. We know God worked six days and rested on the seventh day when he created the world. But it seems easier for us to feel we are in the Lord's will when working hard rather than when we rest. The time for rest is also given to us by God and for a purpose.

With this philosophy she has maintained positive feelings about retirement. That she needs more rest now is also according to God's plan, she says. There is time to focus on the inward journey. I marvel at her contentment with life.

To live in Christ is to seek his will rather than my own, and to know the difference. Because I belong to God, I am able to respond to his will. His eternal purposes can be fulfilled through me if I maintain a sustained relationship with him. It is therefore imperative that I seek God's will before confronting issues or making decisions.

I have been a college teacher for almost seven years. I find that the discernment of God's will is uppermost in the minds of many young people. They want to be certain that they have chosen the right profession, the right life partner or the right job. They want to be in the Lord's will in making life's choices.

"**To live in Christ** is to feel genuine sorrow for the suffering or trouble of another person and to act on these feelings with an outstretched hand."

The individuals who seem to have the most difficulty discerning God's will and having peace about their decisions are those who try to do this alone. They need a body of believers who will pray with them, listen, give counsel when asked and give support when the decision is made. Alone it is so easy to run ahead of God, to confuse personal, self-centered goals with God's will.

This body of believers is essential also when confession and forgiveness become necessary.

To live in Christ means confessing our sins promptly and forgiving or being forgiven without delay. Confession and forgiveness are disciplines that can transform our lives; healing and renewing of the inner spirit follows.

An inaccurate view of the believing community can make confession difficult. If we see it as a fellowship of saints, we may think we alone struggle with failures and shortcomings. Actually we are sinners together, forgiven by God in Christ.

Years ago we related to a young couple who was plagued with almost insurmountable marriage problems. The pastor who called on them from time to time always came away with a deep feeling of hopelessness. Finally, divorce proceedings were begun.

The wife moved out and the husband hired an older woman to keep house and care for the children. Suddenly the wife felt "nudged" to return home. Not long after this she had what she felt was a genuine encounter with the Lord. A small group from the church formed around the needs of this family. They became the body of believers with whom the couple could relate, make confession to and experience forgiveness. This opportunity to confess their sins and hear others also confess sin was the begin-

life

Pearl Bartel

ning of a spiritual growth that is miraculous.

Confession is a valuable discipline in getting rid of unfinished business. When we are at odds with someone and have not confronted or asked forgiveness, then our business with that person is unfinished. This can lead to broken relationships which are at the root of much unhappiness, bitterness and illness.

Recently the middle-aged father of a young friend of ours died suddenly. As we listened to her grief, she remarked that there was no unfinished business between them. This thought was comforting to her; she loved her father dearly. Confession and forgiveness apparently helped to keep communication lines open.

To forgive helps to restore relationships, eliminate bitterness and release a compassionate spirit within us.

To live in Christ is to feel genuine sorrow for the suffering or trouble of another person, and to act on these feelings with an outstretched hand. Jesus modeled the compassionate spirit when he "saw the crowds and had compassion for them, because they were . . . like sheep without a shepherd" (Matthew 9:36). He healed the blind, the lame and the woman with the hemorrhage. His compassion extended to sinners and social outcasts.

The authenticity of our Christian witness is in question unless it is accompanied by a compassionate spirit. When we face some of the hard issues of life, a judgmental spirit seems to take over. This leads at best to a fearful, conditional reaching out; or it may result in complete avoidance of the person in need.

Paul tells us to accept one another for the glory of God as Christ has accepted us (Romans 15:7). Sometimes we are afraid that acceptance means an easy tolerance or condoning of objectionable traits or acts.

A letter from a close friend said how difficult life had been in the past year. It had begun with the birth of a child with genetic abnormalities. This child, Judy, has now had eye surgery twice and will need heart surgery in the next year or two. Even with the best of medical care, Judy will never function as a normal human being. She will be retarded and have severe visual impairment, among other things. The family has a strong commitment to live in Christ.

My friend was pregnant again; this was not planned. This baby was due to

He wants a suit

Louise Dueck

I want a suit.
Those words from our
jean-clad, almost-eighteen
son struck us dumb.

We considered the times
we'd begged him to wear
a suit, to no avail.
Now, he was asking for one.

The suit, complete with
vest, shirt, tie and shoes,
was duly purchased and,
after alterations, duly worn.

God says to us,
"Wear a suit. You need
a buckle of truth around
your waist, integrity

as your vest, your feet
shod with the equipment
of the gospel of peace,
and a hat of salvation."

He guarantees a perfect
fit, no alterations necessary.
And he gives to us an invisible
shield of faith for a boutonniere.

"**To live in Christ** is to live with a sense of positive expectation and celebration."

be born before Judy was to be one year old. They were worried sick that this child might also have serious disabilities. They had decided to have an amniocentesis, a diagnostic procedure that can assess the health status of the unborn child. Because of the gravity of the decision that faced them if the procedure indicated another disabled child, they were afraid to tell anyone else about the pregnancy. They are members of a church that holds human life in high regard. They had not felt free to take anyone within the church into their confidence. She expressed the feeling in her letter that the whole world rested on her shoulders alone. "I cry a lot," she wrote. She wrote that she could probably never live with herself if she had an abortion. But the thought of having *two* babies with severe disabilities less than a year apart was also unfathomable.

How did I respond to my friend's dilemma in a compassionate spirit? I tried to feel her misery and depth of despair. Her problem was of such complexity that simple generalizations offered little help. She needed her church and its support, but she was not comfortable going there with this problem. The fact that there are deep differences of opinion on the right approach to problem pregnancies added to her emotional burden. She needed someone who would neither judge nor condemn but allow her to express her innermost feelings. She needed someone who would help her draw upon the resources she needed to meet her crisis. I prayed that God would surround her with his love and grant her the wisdom to make a decision she can live with the rest of her life.

To live in Christ is to live with a sense of positive expectation and celebration. Jesus entered the world in an aura of expectation and jubilation. "I will bring you good news of great joy," sang the angels.

Tonight I received "good news" which brought me joy. I called my friend with the problem pregnancy. She informed me that she just gave birth to Carol, a beautiful normal healthy baby. "We are so thankful," she said. I thank God for this happy change in my friend's life. She went on to say she is praying for me.

Joy and celebration motivate our creativity; it provides the balance we need to maintain our strength and our spirit. The Bible is full of celebration. People clapped their hands, made joyful noises, shouted to God with loud songs of joy and danced.

Celebration has been important in our family. We have celebrated both large and small events. When my husband and sons finished shingling the roof, we celebrated. Successful (and not so successful) sports events in which our children participated were cause for celebration, also piano recitals, art shows and completion of special projects. After receiving encouraging news about my illness, we picked up my mother and went to a Chinese restaurant.

There are many things for which I praise God—a loving family, a concerned, praying congregation, Christian colleagues at work who are also close friends, an anticipated grandchild this summer, as well as another daughter's wedding. Romans 8:38-39 is especially meaningful to me now: "For I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, [nor multiple myeloma] nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus." •

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My life is a gift from God

Helen Friesen

I checked my daily Bible reading guide from the American Bible Society for the suggested portion for the day. The passage suggested came from James 1. Using the Good News Bible that morning, I sat spellbound as I read verse 18: "By his own will he brought us into being through the word of truth, so that we should have the first place among all his creatures."

I had read the Bible through a number of times in the King James Version and the Revised Standard Version. This was the first time I'd read that verse in Today's English Version. I felt compelled to add my own comment in the margin: "Even me?"

I was adopted. Even though I'd passed my 50th birthday sometime earlier, I'd never had a particular verse grip me like that one. From the beginning of my earliest memories I had known I was adopted. Now my Bible seemed to say that even though my origins were unknown to me, God wanted me to be born. That was powerful medicine.

In the small rural Mennonite community in which I had lived, adoption was uncommon in the mid-1920s. Like most children, I didn't want to be different. When quizzed by a cousin or a classmate in school about who my real father and mother were, I resented their lively curiosity.

Surely my response of "I don't know" carried a bit of heat since I didn't want my life to be different from theirs. If I were naughty, sometimes people outside the family insinuated it was probably because of my "bad blood"—whatever that might be. I developed a mental image of needing to do better than others simply to be on a par with them.

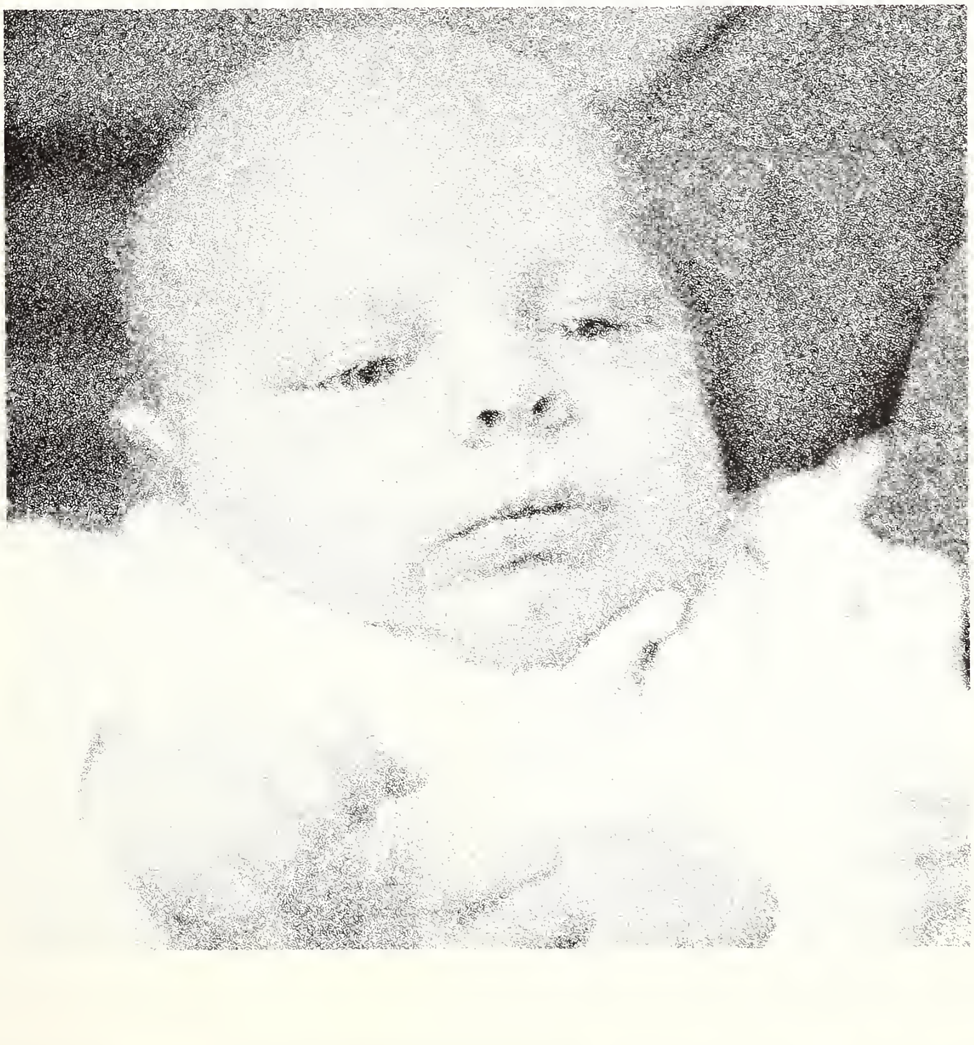
As a teenager my curiosity about my origins grew. I realized that my birth must have been an embarrassment to someone—that for them it might have been a relief if I had never been born. I was too ashamed to mention this to anyone. I felt sure it was sinful to let my mind wander on such paths. Since I had a good home, why should I even ponder such things?

The gifts I had were nurtured in the family setting. When my parents discovered I had musical ability, they even bought a piano. I did well in school, perhaps a partial payment of the debt I owed those who loved and cared for me.

Even though my parents had limited education, they saw to it that I went to college. Leaving the home community for college was a special time. Fellow students didn't know about that invisible tag "adopted." I was accepted for who I was. College also led to a special

"Where did you come from, baby dear?
Out of the everywhere into here . . ."

from "At the Back of the North Wind," a song by George MacDonald (1824-1905)



young man. We were married and I moved 500 miles from home.

I discovered my parentage. In the last decade or so the adoption records in the state of Kansas became accessible to those who have been adopted. My mother alerted me to this and indicated that if I ever wanted to learn more about my background I should feel free to do so.

I wavered. The curiosity was there, but I questioned my ability to deal with whatever facts might emerge from such a search. Would I learn from whom I had inherited perfect pitch? In my youthful fantasies I'd wondered if my biological mother might be a famous concert pianist who had loved unwisely.

Eventually I took the plunge, and the picture revealed something less than pleasant. My life had begun under the cloak of rape and incest. A young woman, blackmailed into silence, had been too terrified to report that her stepfather took indecent liberties with her. She became pregnant.

God gave me life. The story reminded me of the picture I had seen earlier in *The Mennonite*. It showed a hospital garbage can containing aborted fetuses. Had I been conceived today under the same circumstances, surely I'd have been a prime candidate for being thrown into that garbage can. Out of the shattering and traumatic experience of rape and incest I had been given life.

Could I now assume that in spite of such an inglorious beginning God really desired my birth? Could this be his way of making something positive out of something ugly?

In a quote I'd clipped from the *Mennonite Weekly Review* of March 27, 1980, Billy Graham indicated that he was opposed to abortion except in cases of incest, rape or when the mother's life was at stake. Even then he had ambivalent feelings because of the case of Ethel Waters.

Twila Knaack wrote a book about Ethel Waters called *I Touched a Sparrow*. On page 23 Ethel relates that her mother became pregnant at the age of 12 when she was raped at knifepoint. The baby born from that experience was Ethel. Surely Ethel's gift of song and her work with the Billy Graham team were used by God in a mighty ministry. Although mine was no household name like Ethel Waters, surely God could use my life too.

I'm not the only one ever born illegitimately. *The Book of Lists of 1977* gives names of some famous (and also infamous) people. The more noted include people like Paul Cezanne, the French painter; Leonardo da Vinci, the Italian artist; Alexandre Dumas, the French novelist; Henry M. Stanley, the British journalist and discoverer of Livingstone; Richard Wagner, the German composer; and Booker T. Washington, the black U.S. educator. It has been said that there is no such thing as an illegitimate child—just illegitimate parents.

The gift of life is precious. Those who are conceived in inauspicious moments still have something to contribute.

God gave me a second birth. While my first birth brought anguish to my biological mother, the second birth which gave me new life is the special one of which Galatians 4:5 (RSV) speaks, regarding our becoming the adopted sons (children) of God.

Surely this "adoption" is the one that equips me with the kind of life that gives meaning to my existence. The spot which is mine from God is one no one else can fill. I became the wife of a man who accepted me without knowing my biological origins. I bore three sons, can claim six grandchildren, have taught numerous Sunday school classes, listened patiently and tried to encourage hundreds of piano and organ students, directed choirs, played for countless church services, weddings and funerals and written letters—a sample of the niche I've filled.

My challenge? To live my life, flawed though it may be in many ways, as a vindication for being given life and to bring honor to him who granted me life. The abundant life of which John 10:10 speaks can also be mine. Hopefully I can be the kind of person who cares about others and gives hope to some who may have thought their life had little value.

I take heart knowing that when God gives me life, regardless of the circumstances of my birth or background, he gives me that life for a purpose. His desire is that I love him and also love my neighbors, showing them the same caring attitude I have for God. •

"By his own will he brought us into being through the word of truth, so that we should have the first place among all his creatures."

Circles can become vicious

Lola Antifaev

The circles are so vicious, Lord.
Confusing, exhausting circles of
pain
fear
despair
isolation
guilt
That grip, bind, constrict.
Endless searching,
struggling,
screaming.
Resisting the terror of new birth.

The circles are so bonding, Lord.
Calming, energizing circles of
health
courage
hope
fellowship
forgiveness
That free, release, expand.
Endless securing,
submitting,
singing.
Exploding with beauty of abundant Life.

I propose a "Dust Bowl reunion"

Calvin Redekop

They swooped in so fast and thick, it became dark at noon. We could hear the ominous rumble for several hours, so we had ample warning. Father had rushed to town 40 miles away for the poison and bran which he mixed and frantically spread on the wheat, already in the milk stage. I rode on the back of the truck, watching the spreader throw out the bran, and the voracious animals gorging themselves and keeling over in the drunken stupor of death.

The hordes were grasshoppers. When it wasn't grasshoppers, it was army worms or winds so strong that the sand-laden stratospheric clouds obscured the sun.

Year after year my father and his brother plowed and planted, and just as routinely they harvested dust and disappointment. "Next year," they would say. Finally, in desperation, my family left—"Grapes of Wrath" style (1937)— for Oregon, the land of fruit and rain.

The irony in this story is that the area (Lustre, Mont.) has become a stabilized, if not affluent, wheat farming community. Disaster has passed and things look good. There is oil being pumped in barnyards where earlier families lived on relief.

Where are all those people who experienced that time of plague and drought—immigrants from Saskatchewan, Minnesota and Kansas, who settled on the Fort Peck Indian Reservation to stake out a new life? Did the Dust Bowl have any point except getting away from it as fast as possible?

As a child at the "Wall Street" church, I remember Grandfather Wall preaching repentance and praying for rain and for the courage to endure. I remember the frequent visits of the *Reiseprediger* (itinerant preachers), who would call for repentance, urging us to secure our souls safely in heaven. But I do not remember hearing a prayer asking God to help us remember our indebtedness to and obligation for the land. A salvation where God had created a world which was good and a humanity which was to live in harmony with that creation as well as with people I cannot recall.

Why get all teary about Montana dust? Isn't our eternal soul the point of the whole human history? And isn't it logical that the sooner this earth comes to an end, the sooner Christ can return to take us to Paradise?

So it doesn't matter what we do with the created world, since it will ultimately burn like brimstone—the Revelation story could be the nuclear holocaust, so why fight it? Why not encourage it along so Paradise can come sooner?

I cannot forget the Dust Bowl. I believe I was privileged to have a "sneak preview" of what the human bird has been doing in "fowling this nest." I remember being awed by the distances and the shimmering waves dancing across the horizon on a hot summer day. But mainly I saw a land that was cruel and had to be tamed and made to do our bidding.

What should those "peaceful in the land" have thought anyhow? Had they not been peaceful and minded their own business? Yes. "Minding our own business" meant grabbing our share of the land and "hustling." Making peace with the brother and the stranger has been our thing and it is of increasing importance, but what of peace with creation (*shalom*)?

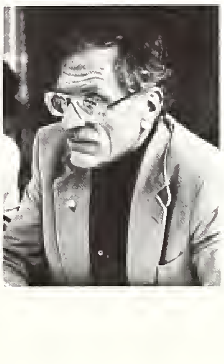
There are good biblical reasons why the children of Menno don't remember the lessons of the '30s. Because we are frugal, we buy gas guzzlers (especially used ones) so we can give the savings to MCC relief. We are sober, so we do not solarize. We avoid the costly errors and extra labor so that we can volunteer for VS. By increasing our farm operations, including huge tractors and massive chemicals, we are feeding the world's hungry.

Unfortunately, a bit of research and reflection show that gas guzzlers do not result in parallel donations to MCC. Solarization has not kept anyone from voluntary service. The United States is a net importer of food; so where is all that corn and wheat going?

What would a Roper or Gallup poll show regarding the children of Menno? Any difference in the per capita horsepower in our autos? Per capita energy wastage? Unusual innovations to conserve? Per capita amount of garbage sent to the dump? I am sure the latter must be lower, for there have been a lot of thrift shops springing up in Menno-land.

What does the Bible say to the Christian about the creation? Jesus tells us (Matthew 10:16) we should be as harmless as doves and wise as serpents. Be harmless to whom? To what? Be wise in reference to what? What can grasshoppers and army worms tell us?

We need a forum to think about this. I propose a "Dust Bowl reunion." Let's each bring back some Montana sand. The menu for the day will be thistle soup. That diet might help us think wisely about serpents.



Calvin Redekop is professor of sociology at Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, ON N2L 3G6.

Looking to Bethlehem '83

I have high expectations and hopes for Bethlehem '83—a time when we will be able to celebrate our heritage through fellowship, singing, worship, displays and tours. Additionally, my hopes are that the delegates will come prepared to grapple with difficult issues during the business sessions, that the General Board will be attentive listeners and participants, and that the result will be vibrant new program directions and our establishment of priorities for the future which will provide for a strengthened conference, working in ever closer union with the Mennonite Church in carrying forth the work entrusted to us. *Irene Dunn, 1015 Barton Drive, Normal, IL 61761, member of the General Board and member of the Normal Church—a dual member congregation*

Dunn

Dick

Having had the great pleasure (with only a little pain) of working and worshiping together on an inter-Mennonite level in Ontario for the past few decades, it seems like an appropriate and long overdue gesture to experience the same on a broader church level. My hope and prayer is that Bethlehem '83 will turn out to be more than a germinal gesture—even a telling turning point that will allow us to put our petty provincial politics behind us and catapult us forward in our interface with each other as we face the world with one common front in the name of Christ, as our MCC experience has helped us to do for over six decades. *Bill W. Dick, counseling psychologist, University of Waterloo (Ont.) and chairman of the board of MCC (Ontario)'s Shalom Counselling Service*

We all know and are aware of many problems, as well as good things happening in all conferences. Why has it taken us so long to have a joint conference?

Some of our common sharing will surely be helpful to both of us. I have worked with Mennonite Church people and appreciated them very much.

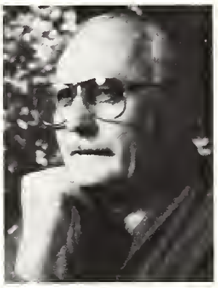
There are many things we already do together; I hope there will be more. *Susan Rempel, Box 164, Gretna, MB R0G 0V0, homemaker, member of the Gretna Bergthaler Church*

Because Bethlehem '83 will take place in the eastern United States, specifically Pennsylvania, I anticipate the renewal of our historic sense and with that our reason for being called to this continent. That renewed historical awareness should result in a stronger search for God's calling of the peace church within the context of international military domination.

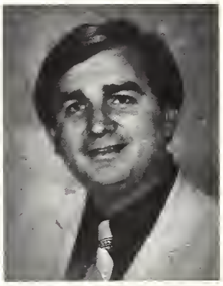
I look forward to the probing of Mennonite unity. Mennonites in North America have been a quarreling family that preaches peace. The big test now is whether two conferences can not only meet simultaneously to follow through on the institutional planning done by executives, but whether there will be meaning in the actual intersection of two bodies of people. The coffee breaks, mealtimes and the casual huddles on the periphery of the main events will perhaps be the best indicators of whether GCs really enjoy being with the MCs. The Holy Spirit creates unity but won't be jammed into institutional molds. I am looking forward to a non-pushy testing of the Spirit at this event.

Finally, I look forward to joining with the Cheyenne Mennonite delegates who now have in their hands a hymnal with a body of original Cheyenne tunes and texts. That has to be some kind of a first and a valid witness to concrete efforts at de-Westernizing the gospel in our mission witness. *Menno Wiebe, MCC (Canada) Native Concerns, 201-1483 Pembina Highway, Winnipeg, MB R3T 2C8, member of the Charleswood Church*

I expect to find inspiration and exhilaration as well as weariness with sitting through a whole week of meetings. The biggest change I expect for GCs attending their first conference together with MCs is a change in debating style. I doubt that we will argue as stridently as we have in recent years. We may even realize that the process of being together to affirm our agreements and to debate our differences is every bit as important as the votes we cast or the statements we adopt. I hope so. *Paul I. Dyck, 10499 Augsburger Road, Route 2, Bluffton, OH 45817, administrator, member of First Church*



Dyck



Voth

"The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body." When Paul wrote these words he was probably not thinking of thousands of people coming from hundreds, even thousands of miles to spend a week together. But it is my hope that these seven days will help us realize the oneness we may have in Christ. I do not expect us to simply dissolve our respective programs, but I hope this joint venture of the Mennonite Church and the General Conference will help us to learn through our differences and let the grace of God destroy barriers. I see small groups of believers from differing roads meeting together and finding a common spiritual heritage, even though their historical heritage isn't the same. Then our beliefs on peace may begin to be realized in the midst of God's people, the place where we Mennonites with our many divisions have not always practiced what we so fervently preach. *James Voth, 2226 Park St., Paso Robles, CA 93446*

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***The Mennonite* staff: (left to right) Larry Cornies, associate editor; Gordon Houser, editorial assistant; Bernie Wiebe, editor**

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More Bethlehem '83 nominations

Administration

Elect three

Paul I. Dyck, administrator, Mennonite Memorial Home, 1973-; former missionary in India; chairman, Mennonite Mission in India; member, poverty fund steering committee; member, DA, 1977-83; member, First Mennonite Church, Bluffton, Ohio. Vision: "To challenge the church to use its wealth as a trust to be used to do God's will instead of increasing consumption."

Gladys C. Graber, professor in business, Hesston (Kan.) College; former high school teacher, Hillsboro, Kan.; missionary to Zaire under Board of Missions, 1951-64; member, Hebron Mennonite Church, Buhler, Kan. Vision: "The Division of Administration should apply biblical principles of stewardship and fairness and should exercise wise judgment in the development and the distribution of resources."

Ron Preheim, farmer; chairman, Northern District peace and social concerns committee, 1975-81; member, NDC executive committee, 1975-81; member, General Conference peace and justice reference council, 1975-81; VS worker for MCC; member, Bethel College board; member, Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson, Neb. Vision: "DA needs to continue being aware of equities, the General Conference's potential and relating to motivational/educational factors that lead to understanding and growth."

Edgar Rempel, treasurer, Conference of Mennonites in Canada; former businessman and Credit Union management; member, Bethel Mennonite Church, Winnipeg. Vision: "DA should serve the role of being financial stewards and facilitators. This role should bridge our corporate vision and the willingness, ability and resources to carry out that vision."

Richard A. Rosenberger, member, West Swamp Mennonite Church, Quakertown, Pa.; member, Bluffton College board of trustees; former member, Eastern District business administration committee; lawyer in private practice for over 25 years. Vision: "Our efforts to fulfill the mission of the General Conference require a careful examination of the application of our time, talents and funds."

Theodore Sommer, president, Sommer Bros. Seed Co., Pekin, Ill.; member, Bethel Mennonite Church, Pekin; former secretary and treasurer, Central District Conference; member, Camp Friedenswald committee; board member, Bluffton College and Mennonite Hospital. Vision: "To help provide the proper organization in DA so that it can adequately carry out the overall work of the General Conference."

Continuing members of the Division of Administration include Duane Heffelbower, Reedley, Calif., Jake Hildebrand, St. Catharines, Ont., and Carol Suter, Pandora, Ohio. Three additional members are appointed by the General Board.

Schowalter board

Elect one

Edward Diller, attorney; served with MCC in Teachers Abroad Program in Jamaica, 1970-73; trustee of Bluffton College; member, Cincinnati Mennonite Fellowship. Vision: "My goal as trustee of the Schowalter Foundation would be to work with the administration and the other trustees of the Foundation in order to wisely distribute and maintain the assets of the Foundation in accordance with its stated purposes."

J. Winfield Fretz, acting president, Mennonite Biblical Seminary; former professor of sociology and economics, Bethel College, North Newton, Kan.; president and professor of sociology, Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, Ont.; former member, Board of Christian Service and board of MBS; for 20 years a restaurant owner. Vision: "The management and use of General Conference endowment funds requires broad general knowledge of Mennonite programs and world needs in order to set priorities and distribute them helpfully.

The continuing GC representative on the Schowalter Foundation board of trustees is Alvin L. Funk, Aberdeen, Idaho. Other trustees are selected by the Mennonite Church and the Church of God in Christ, Mennonite.

Women in Mission

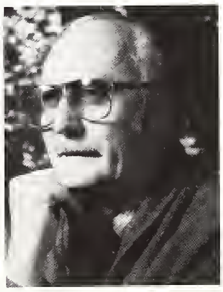
President-elect

Elsie Flaming, member, North Leamington (Ont.) United Mennonite Church; former president, Southwest Ontario WM; Canadian vice president, GCWM, 1977-83; member, CMC nominating committee; registered nurse. Vision: "My vision for Women in Mission is that we recognize people's needs and that we minister to them. I envision this as a caring for and a sharing with people in our congregations and communities at home and abroad."

Second vice president

Helga Froese, nurse; member, Steinbach (Man.) Mennonite Church; former member and president, Manitoba women's MCC auxiliary committee; former president, local women's group. Vision: "There is an urgency in the world to share the gospel. We women have the privilege and responsibility to pray, work, give and tell others of Christ's saving power."

Irene Klassen, homemaker; nurse; member, First Mennonite Church, Calgary; president, Alberta Women's Mission Conference, 1970-75; former member, executive of Women's Inter-Church Council of Calgary. Vision: "I would see my position as one of promoting an even closer understanding and appreciation between the women of



Dyck

Graber

Preheim

Rempel

Rosenberger

Sommer

Diller

Fretz

Canada and the United States, of affirming individual groups and at the same time encouraging the sharing of common goals and projects in a broader, stronger mission."

Program committee

Elect one

Art Isaak, therapist in mental health center; assistant pastor, Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson, Neb., 1951-55; director, religious education, Zion Mennonite Church, Souderton, Pa., 1958-64; member, West Swamp Mennonite Church, Quakertown, Pa.; Eastern District program committee, 1978- . Vision: "The program committee is like an ear to the ground to listen for needs which can be responded to in our conference sessions."

Erland Waltner, part-time professor of English Bible, AMBS (1957-); part-time executive secretary, Mennonite Medical Association (1979-); former president of GCMC (1956-62), of Mennonite World Conference (1963-73) and of Mennonite Biblical Seminary (1958-78); member, Hively Avenue Mennonite Church, Elkhart, Ind. Vision: "Conference sessions should accent creatively our oneness in Christ, whether women or men, Canadian or U.S. citizens, lay people or professionals."

Continuing members of the program committee include Kathy Hildebrand, St. Catharines, Ont., James Schrag, Newton, Kan., and John Sprunger, Cordell, Okla. Two additional members will be appointed by the General Board.

Flaming

Froese

Klassen

Isaak

Waltner

Churches applying for conference membership

The following churches have applied and are being recommended by the General Board for membership in the General Conference. The delegate body will vote on the acceptance of these congregations on Tuesday afternoon, Aug. 2.

Ann Arbor (Mich.) Mennonite Fellowship grew from a group of people primarily from Mennonite Church and General Conference background. They began meeting on Sunday evenings for discussion and social activities nine years ago. About a year later Sunday morning worship and Sunday school began. In recent years the group has hired a resource coordinator on a one-fifth-time basis. Gertrude Warkentin was named as contact person. The membership is eight, but the worshiping community is 20-30. The group's affiliation has been with the Central District Conference and the Mennonite Church. Under discussion is membership in the Church of the Brethren.

Covenant Mennonite Church, Winkler, Man., began as a discussion item in the Bergthaler Mennonite Church's annual membership meeting in February 1979. To determine the need for another congregation in Winkler, that church's Bible study groups discussed the question. One group actively worked on the new church concept, seeing it as an outreach to the community. After more membership and council meetings, the Bergthaler Church passed a resolution the spring of 1981 to move ahead. Some individuals from other churches became active in the new church, which now has 27 members. Covenant Church is a member of the Conference of Mennonites in Manitoba and the Conference of Mennonites in Canada.

Dallas (Texas) Mennonite Fellowship took form in the early '70s as a result of a policeman planting a sign on his front lawn which read "First Mennonite Church of Dallas." A Baptist who discovered the Anabaptist vision, he met with ethnic Mennonites in Dallas for several years in homes. The group has around 40 members and meets in a rented hall of the Midway Hills Christian Church. Membership grew by adding others who appreciate the wholistic gospel, including the peace witness. The fellowship has developed the Dallas Peace Center for research, education and action. Ernst Harder is pastor. The fellowship became a member of the Western District Conference and the South Central Conference in 1975.

Emmanuel Mennonite Church, Clearbrook, B.C., began in 1980 with the Eben-Ezer Mennonite Church there laying the groundwork. It became an entity on its own on Jan. 1, 1981. The group chose its name and a series of goals and objectives, including the intention of being a Mennonite church. They secured a pastor, wrote a constitution and bylaws, and undertook a building project, having moved into the education wing while work on the sanctuary continues. Presently they are involved in a local service project, an MCC project, giving to the Commission on Overseas Mission, debt retirement, church school and their worship service. Eugene P. Klassen is pastor of this 114-member church. The church is a member of the United Mennonite Churches of British Columbia and CMC.

First Mennonite Church, Oak Park, Ill., celebrated the third anniversary of its founding Nov. 7, 1982. Under the leadership of David Whitermore, a group had started with eight people and had 40 by the fall of 1982. They licensed June Ann Showalter for the ministry then. Other highlights have been gift discernment, talking through convictions, and a goal-setting retreat. Statements on faith and behavioral guidelines were written. They have cooperated in outreach in the Chicago area and with the Student and Young Adult Services work there. Most of the 17 members are busy professionals, and all live scattered as much as 30 miles apart. Ardean Goertzen is their pastor. The church has membership in the Central District Conference and Illinois Mennonite Conference of the Mennonite Church.

Fort Collins (Colo.) Mennonite Fellowship members are relatively recent transplants to their city of 80,000 in the Rocky Mountains. They came to further their education, take jobs, start businesses or retire. The fellowship began as an informal biweekly group meeting for fellowship and discussion in 1973 and later became a worshiping community.

(continued on following page)

Service is central for the 17 members, who have joined the Fort Collins Interfaith Council to meet needs in their community. They also actively work on the issue of nuclear weapons, affirming the New Abolitionist Covenant. David Gingerich is their coordinator. February 1982 they purchased a building with assistance from the Rocky Mountain Conference of the Mennonite Church and the Western District Conference since they are members of these conferences.

Haight-Ashbury Mennonite Fellowship, San Francisco, developed from a vision for a Mennonite presence in the city. That is partly why James and Leanna Rhodes located there in 1975, starting two Bible study groups Sunday morning and evening. The latter grew stronger. A group of voluntary service workers elected to stay beyond their terms and form a household with the Rhodes. They wrote a covenant, but in 1979 the Rhodes left. The group then moved into a larger meeting place and shifted from communal living to developing a worshiping community and mission groups. They developed a peace library, participate in ecumenical activities and relate to street and neighborhood people. Lois Janzen is pastor of the 29-member church, a member of the Pacific District Conference and the Southwest Conference of the Mennonite Church.

Iglesia Cristian Menonita Cuerpo de Cristo, Corona, N.Y., started as a group in 1980. Julio Dueñas, a Colombian who has been in the United States 10 years, gave it leadership after having started three other churches among his Latin neighbors. This fourth group met in his large barbershop. A Colombian Mennonite pastor, Antonio Arévalo, suggested he contact the General Conference as a denomination to which the group could relate. Through Dueñas' contact with Hector Valencia, then Commission on Overseas Mission's Latin America secretary, the Commission on Home Ministries began working with the group in 1980. The 50 members have Sunday services and Bible study, weekday Bible study, an evangelistic service and a committee is researching Christian education materials. The church is a member of the Eastern District Conference.

Langley (B.C.) Mennonite Church began with a group of Mennonites meeting for Bible studies and Sunday night worship in 1975. Early in 1977 they began meeting regularly for Sunday morning worship and in December received their charter, having 19 members. They bought an old Presbyterian church building in August 1980. Pastoral leaders were Erwin Cornelson, Jacob Tilitzky, Sig Polle and Henry Krause. Along with regular church activities, they have sponsored two Vietnamese refugees, lead in monthly services for the aged, release their building for a preschool, hold work days for member families and sponsor a Mennonite Central Committee voluntary service unit. David Gustafson, their first full-time pastor, is expected to give part of that time to a Victim Offender Reconciliation Program. The church has 43 members, and has joined the United Mennonite Churches of British Columbia and CMC.

Lawrence (Kan.) Mennonite Fellowship grew out of University of Kansas Mennonite students meeting for social, spiritual and recreational purposes. They and some residents met every other week for worship and sharing in the 1970s, before organizing Oct. 31, 1979, with David Schmidt as coordinator. John Linscheid became full-time coordinator in August 1980 and was licensed as pastor in 1981. Formulating a statement of faith in May 1981, about 25 signed as members, associate members and friends of the fellowship. They began a Sunday school, child dedication and relief projects in 1981-82 and rented facilities in January 1983. The group has 15 members.

Mankato (Minn.) Mennonite Church started meeting in the fall of 1979, sponsored by the Northern District Conference's home missions committee. They met in the pastor's home for seven months, then in a Catholic girls' school, where the church was organized with 11 members, four being baptized on organization day. They moved to the First Christian Church building in September 1981. They have agreed to the General Conference confession of faith, elected a leadership committee of three and are working on a constitutional guide. Sunday school is held cooperatively with First Christian. Regular Sunday services, weekday Bible studies and special services are also held. Henry D. Penner is pastor. Although there are only 13 members, the church hosted the 1982 annual conference of the Northern District Conference, to which they belong.

Moencopi Mennonite Fellowship, Tuba City, Ariz., began about 75 years ago. The fellowship has at times dwindled to one or two members, such as Susie Archambeau and Mabel Jenkins, but made a new covenant and signed a register of membership April 12, 1981. Participants are teachers, homemakers, basket weavers, potters, builders, gardeners, nurses, ministers and counselors. Members are active as volunteers in a thrift shop, recreation, arts and crafts, corn grinding, alcoholism counseling, and repairs and maintenance for the community. Sundays they worship and eat a meal together. Pearl Janzen is their director. The fellowship has eight official members and has joined the Pacific District Conference.

Mountain Community Mennonite Church, Palmer Lake, Colo., celebrated its beginning in October 1982, but it really started many years ago. Mennonite Voluntary Service workers, teachers, social workers and others were attracted to the Tri-Lakes area, 20 miles north of Colorado Springs. A house fellowship formed in 1977 and met regularly. The Beth-El Mennonite Church, an MC church in Colorado Springs, asked Rick Shellenberger and Rick Pankratz in March 1982 to assess interest in a fellowship there. About 28 adults signed a statement that a church at Palmer Lake was feasible. The group meets regularly for Sunday morning worship and Sunday school with an average attendance of 55. The pastor is Timothy R. Detweiler.

Niverville (Man.) Mennonite Church had its beginnings with the Mennonite immigration wave to Canada from Russia in 1924. By 1926 many of these had begun joint services with the Mennonite Brethren in Niverville in a building owned by the United Church. From 1927-1944 the congregation was a member church of the Schoenwieser Mennonite Church in Winnipeg. They purchased a building in 1944 and moved to the present lot. In 1956 a new building was begun which is still used for worship and education with a further addition in 1977. The church has Sunday school, boys and girls' clubs, a youth group, women's group and other programs. They have one adult German class, but all other classes and services are in English. The 176-member church is a member of the Conference of Mennonites in Manitoba and CMC, and the pastor is Del Epp.

Peace Mennonite Church, Richmond, B.C., began when Sherbrooke Mennonite Church in Vancouver became too large and Prince of Peace Mennonite Church there dissolved. An interchurch steering committee was formed in 1978 to explore the possibility of a new congregation in Richmond. The Sherbrooke Church had purchased property for this purpose 10 years earlier. About 40 people were committed to the 1978 venture. They called Palmer and Ardys Becker to give leadership and be-

(continued on p. 229)

CONFERENCE EDITION OF
THE MENNONITE

Commission on Home Ministries

God's Mission in North America and Our Conference's Part in It

Instead of describing the work of the Commission on Home Ministries as pictured in the accompanying map, this CHM report is a proposal for a new effort in North America. It is divided into six sections:

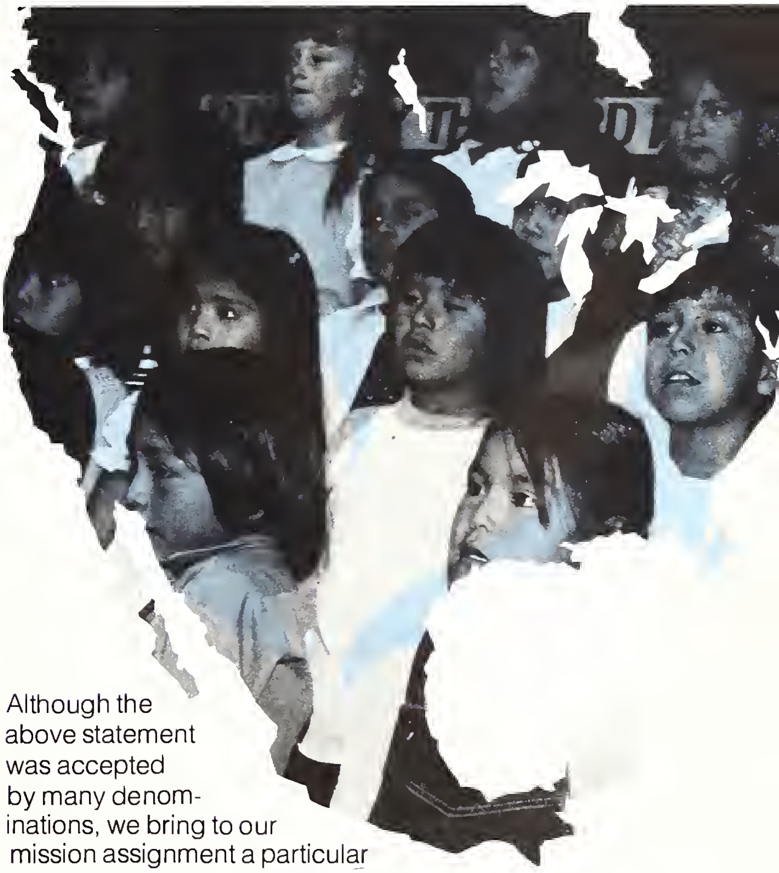
I. Our purpose in North America
II. Religious trends
III. Social and economic trends
IV. Where we are
V. The proposal in five parts
VI. From planning to implementation

I. What is our purpose in North America?

For what purpose have Mennonites been in North America for three centuries? Are we working on the assignment we understood to be our part of God's mission here?

Some help for these questions is in the statement Christians from many nations and cultures agreed upon at the World Congress on Evangelism in Lausanne, Switzerland:

> "Our Christian presence in the world is indispensable to evangelism, and so is that kind of dialogue whose purpose is to listen sensitively in order to understand. But evangelism itself is the proclamation of the historical, biblical Christ as Savior and Lord, with a view to persuading people to come to him personally and so be reconciled to God. In issuing the gospel invitation we have no liberty to conceal the cost of discipleship. Jesus still calls all who would follow him to deny themselves, take up their cross and identify themselves with his new community. The results of evangelism include obedience to Christ, incorporation into his church, and responsible service in the world (Mark 8:34; Mark 10:43-45; Luke 14:25-33; 2 Corinthians 4, 5).
>
> ". . . The message of salvation implies also a message of judgment upon every form of alienation, oppression and discrimination, and we should not be afraid to denounce evil and injustice wherever they exist. When people receive Christ they are born again into his kingdom and must seek not only to exhibit but also to spread its righteousness in the midst of an unrighteous world. The salvation we claim should be transforming us in the totality of our personal and social responsibilities. Faith without works is dead (Matthew 5:20; 6:33; Luke 6:27, 35; James 2:14-26).*



Although the above statement was accepted by many denominations, we bring to our mission assignment a particular contribution from our heritage. This heritage of being a Believers' Church rather than a state church taught us early not to expect to be on the same side of the issue as governments on such concerns as evangelism, rights of the poor, legal processes, violence and relating to enemies. In the last 300 years in North America, where church and state became more separate, our Mennonite predecessors' heritage of nonconformity helped us to see the joy and enrichment of trusting God to enable us to "live toward" the kingdom way now rather than delay discipleship until it is more widely approved.

We also have a heritage of being an unpopular minority group that has given us the opportunity to relate to other minority groups in North America.

This heritage, which we did not earn or deserve but which has been entrusted to us, should not be wasted. If God's purpose for us is to be salt and light among those who confuse the way of national security with the way of the cross, we should be about our work as salt and light, letting everyone know that a more enriching gospel can be shared.

---

*The Lausanne Covenant, *Evangelizing Neopagan North America*, pp. 191, 192, 1974.

II. Religious trends in North America

There are some developments that might be signs for us as we consider our part in God's mission in North America.

A. Confrontational relationships

The relationships between church and state have not become any less confrontational but apparently more so. This is not so unusual for Mennonites, but it is also happening for other groups, particularly for Protestant and Catholic leadership in the United States and Canada concerning the arms race. Both mainline and evangelical churches are confronting governments about the rights of native peoples, sanctuary for refugees, creationism, abortion, registration for the U.S. military draft and taxes used for military purposes. Billy Graham's confession to denominational leaders in March that he formerly identified Christian faith too much with the American way of life is one of the indicators of sharpened church/state differences.

Churches who believe God sides with the poor and oppressed have always clashed with government economic and security goals, and we probably should not be surprised that governments now resist such church activities as sending garden tractors or school kits to people in need.

Things to consider

We have not yet mastered this difficult kind of witnessing to government, but we may have learned enough about disagreeing with federal policies to be of help to those who are tempted to mere defiance of authority or unconcern about the wider community.

Disagreeing with government even about such things as sending school kits brings disagreements in our own congregations. Often we find ourselves polarized and unable to explore what the Scripture and the Spirit might say to us because the issue has become too divisive to talk about.

If challenges to our beliefs by our society and government are unlikely to decrease, we will need to have the kind of membership covenants and church life that help us as brothers and sisters explore troublesome issues.

B. Needed structural changes

As Mennonite denominations get serious about working closer together and look at structures to do this, we will likely focus attention on organizational problems, equal representation ratios, personnel decisions and working on the maintenance of new organizational structures. Lyle Schaller points out that a period of decreased evangelism occurs when denominations go through such organizational revisions and leadership has to focus on restructuring.

Peace and justice reference council

MVS project

Things to consider

If needed organizational cooperation continues, it will be all the more important for local congregations to keep the witnessing and evangelism responsibility vital. It is also important that we give such work higher priority as a conference so that we have the momentum to keep us from coming to a standstill if structural streamlining is necessary.

C. The North American church decrease

The Third World churches are growing (16,400 new Christians per day in sub-Saharan Africa, 986 per day in East Asia and 1,225 per day in South Asia) while the churches in North America are decreasing or growing more slowly. (The churches in Europe and North America are losing 7,600 per day).

Things to consider

Many nominal and practicing Christians are having their interest aroused by a more exciting Christian faith that draws a line against militarism and takes the fellowship of believers seriously. Rather than adjusting our plans to minimal contacts with non-Christians, we should prepare ourselves all the more to share Jesus Christ with others.

If we are able to respond with the kind of help that is needed, the opportunities in "neopagan" North America are just as real for us as for the growing churches overseas. The one crucial difference is that in North America you and I are the missionaries.

D. Mini mission boards

A number of our congregations tend to be like mini mission boards carrying out their own witness work in housing, offender work, aid to refugees, evangelism efforts of several different kinds, sponsoring peace workshops and other kinds of activities. This seems to be a valuable trend and fits in with the do-it-yourself mood and decentralization trends.

Things to consider

CHM has accepted the role of a clearinghouse to help congregations involved in various kinds of witness learn from the experiences of other congregations. In the clearinghouse role, CHM has collected resources and tools to pass on to others and has helped congregations become part of a network of congregations who can teach each other.

One new development is to encourage congregations to send people to visit language mission work, voluntary service units and conference-supported projects in North America and then report to the congregations their experiences. This seems to enable congregations to do their own outreach more than does a visit by a missionary or MVS worker.

E. Increase of groups offering congregational resources

Parachurch organizations have sprung up in the past to fill the gap created by congregations unable to effectively evangelize or minister to people in need. These organizations often lack rootage in the church and have tried to be partners with congregations. Many offer training to congregations in youth work, evangelism, teaching, counseling, stewardship, outreach planning, organizing volunteers, gift discernment and other kinds of church work. Congregations are not limited to their denomination for finding resources.

Things to consider

If congregations turn to sources with different approaches and theologies, making us more and more pluralistic, the integrity and unity of the denomination may have to be aided by promoting discussion of crucial issues conferencewide. We may need to develop more materials that evaluate the multiple options being offered, and Sunday school classes will need to devote a quarter of study periodically to examine the issues involved and approaches used in doing the assignment given us in North America.

F. The 1980s are proving to be an unusually receptive period for the peace witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ in North America.

Mainline Protestant denominations have set "peace priorities" for their work, and tens of thousands participate in interreligious peace conferences across the continent. Evangelical Protestants are wrestling with their unexamined "just war" traditions and are calling major conferences like that at Fuller Theological Seminary in May 1983. Billy Graham, John R. W. Stott, and Vernon Grounds have declared themselves nuclear pacifists.

Among Roman Catholics, Pope John Paul II preaches peacemaking in Hiroshima, Japan, the U.S. bishops declare use of nuclear weapons to be a sin and further wrestle with whether it is moral to even possess them. The Canadian Catholic bishops analyze and deplore the effects of militarism on the poor. Six Canadian Protestant leaders have prepared a special communication to the churches of Canada urging Christians to write representatives in parliament about complicity in the nuclear arms race and the support of U.S. attempts to build up its nuclear arsenal.

Millions of citizens and professional groups voluntarily work for disarmament initiatives such as the nuclear freeze campaign. Many are unchurched with varying degrees of sympathy and receptivity to a peacemaking gospel.

Things to consider

Once again, "the fields are white for the harvest" (John 4:35) "but the laborers are few" (Matthew 9:37). Mennonites need to be prepared to share the good news of new life in Jesus Christ and his call to joyous discipleship in response to God's grace. Our message to other Christians and to the unchurched is that it is Jesus Christ who is our peace (Ephesians 2:14), and the current peace interest needs that deeper rootage.

G. Spiritual hunger

The term "spirituality" has been used more widely recently and has become a priority in seminaries and religious periodicals. Retreats more familiar to Roman Catholics draw more and more Protestant participants.

"Praying for Peace and Justice" by Ronald Sider reminds readers that "the only hope for our time is a new movement of biblical Christians who immerse their search for peace and justice in prayer and the presence of the Holy Spirit."

Things to consider

Although retreats for children have been well developed, the adults in our congregations may no longer be satisfied with routine prayer. Just as peace witness and service have attracted people outside our tradition and have been bridges to evangelism, it may now be that those who can answer spiritual hunger will find that hunger a bridge to encountering Jesus Christ.

III. Social and economic trends

A. Ethnic changes

The increase of people migrating to North America from Central and South America is not likely to slow down.

The trend of our population to move to urban centers is continuing although there is a decrease in the density of the population in urban centers.

The number of immigrants from Asia is not as large, but if the new arrivals are to be reached that should be done before commitments are made to the consumerism and secularism that plague us.

Things to consider

Urban church planting is still needed, and if we want to plant churches that are visible and can house a variety of ministries, high real estate costs will be a factor.

For a church like ours that has such a small minority of people who are of Hispanic or Asian background, we need to make language mission work a priority if we are going to share the faith with newer arrivals in North America.

B. Vocational shifts and leadership potential

The knowledge industry, service occupations and automation development are supposed to replace the production industry that is moving to overseas locations. Our membership is likely to continue to get more education and training.

The population also has an age bulge that means those in the 35 to 54 age group, which is heavily drawn on for church leadership, will increase by 50 percent by 1995.

Things to consider

The pattern of having a few well-educated male leaders in a congregation has long since been replaced by having a greater number of leaders of both sexes with advanced education and considerable knowledge about our society.

Congregations that have an overabundance of unused leadership tend to find themselves divided if they don't use that leadership for evangelism and witness. It's important to offer training now for the adults under 40 to help congregations look outward at the places where God may be calling them. It may mean that our need for tentmaking church planting clusters of people could be met better now than ever.

C. Aging and church planting

The number of people of retirement age has been increasing, but not all these people stay with their home church. Many have moved to the Sun Belt.

Things to consider

We may need to ask people approaching retirement age to think of giving leadership in church planting. Does it make a difference to Canadian and northern U.S. congregations to know that Florida has one of the lowest percentages of the total population who are church members?

D. World economics

We find North America receiving not only Christian missionaries but missionaries for Islam, Buddhism and other religions whose countries of origin now have strengthened economies and can afford missionary work overseas.

Things to consider

We will need to be flexible and work with unplanned opportunities and unexpected competition to our offer of the Christian alternative.

E. Population shifts

In North America a higher percentage of the population will be city dwellers by the year 2000 than on any other continent. This means that some rural churches will have little if any growth potential. These churches have some new mission challenges in adjusting to a shrinking population.

Things to consider

The rural churches that have supplied our conference with so much mission vision and leadership may be called upon to lead in learning how congregations reshape their vision to a different community. If those congregations find new value in tentmaking pastors, they may be able to help the rest of the denomination develop leadership gifts.

IV. Where we are now

A. General Conference work

The map in this report shows the location of some recently developing ministries in (1) MVS, (2) both old (native people) and new (Asian, Hispanic) language mission work, (3) peace centers to which Mennonites give direction and support.

On that map we could add (4) another layer of dots showing our congregations, (5) another showing places broadcasting the radio and TV spots the conference has developed and (6) still another layer of dots of developing fellowships.

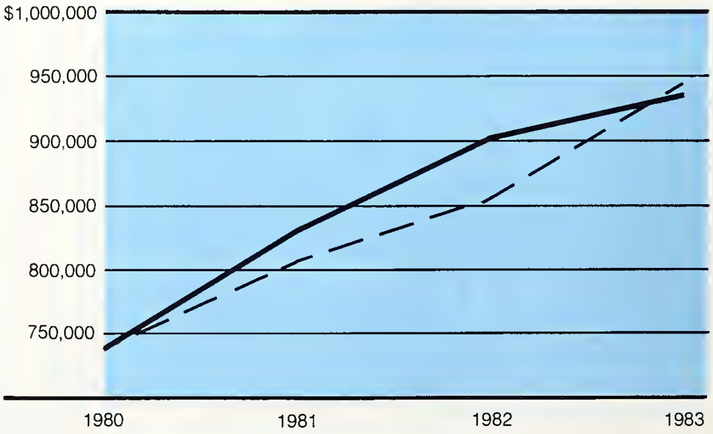
The highest percentage of unchurched people is on the West Coast, where church members make up about 34 percent of the population. We are strongest in the middle of the continent where the percentage of the total population that are church members is about 58 percent.

One implication of this is that to carry out our mission in North America we will need to continue to work through our conference church planting programs. We aren't located in the right places to do all the needed church planting through congregations that can initiate daughter congregations.

B. Financial factors

Below is a chart showing our home mission income for 1980 to 1983 and the effect of inflation.

The implications are that because of inflation our real income is decreasing slightly even though our dollar income is



The upper line represents the 1980 level adjusted for inflation.
The lower line represents dollar income falling below 1980 actual dollars.

CHM Income 1980-1983

	Nominal dollar income	What $738,568 (1980 income) amounts to in actual 1980 dollars	Percent over or under the Consumer Price Index
1980	$738,568	$738,568.00	
1981	808,849	830,125.99	- 2.6%
1982	855,032	904,336.17	- 5.5%
1983	944,824 (goal)	939,353.09	+ .6%

increased annually. The 1983 expenditure proposal has no salary increases and if we reach our income goal it will in effect reach the level of income given in 1980. It appears we have not given home mission work the higher priority that is needed.

C. CHM staff and resources

We also have the following resources to meet the challenge of North American mission opportunities.

1. A commission of 15 members and six reference councils.
2. We have 12 program staff plus three secretarial staff (some part time).

V. Proposal with five parts for mission work in North America

The following proposed thrust on five different fronts is being considered by CHM and the CHM staff. Although General Board decides if the proposals can be financed, the reaction of members of the General Conference is wanted. Readers should feel free to either write to the Commission on Home Ministries, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, with their questions or encouragement or give their concerns to the delegates to Bethlehem '83.

The proposals are as follows:

Proposal 1: 300 church planter seed people in 1983-86

In the triennium of 1983-86, CHM proposes a new effort to back up church planting efforts of congregations, district and provincial mission committees and the Conference of Mennonites in Canada. We have seen that the amount of church planting mission committee budgets can handle is limited by the high cost of full-time, seminary-trained, salaried church planting pastors. As a result we are far more cautious than the early Anabaptists, whose church planting efforts in the early years of the movement seem reckless by comparison, and we are far less bold than the missionaries of the early church.

Chinese Mennonite church, Santa Clara, Calif.

Therefore we are asking our conference this question: Is it time to launch a serious effort to find at least 300 self-supporting people in 1983-86 willing to pursue their vocations and form inter-Mennonite congregations at the same time in whatever location their witness is needed? If it is time to make this major move, these seed people or families will be sought and offered the kind of training needed to share Jesus Christ with others and helped to relocate, if necessary, so they can join with a small group of others in a church planting assignment.

One urgency is that our well-trained young people are being offered attractive salaries well financed by defense contracts. They also need to hear from their churches the more basic life mission factors involved in vocation and job decisions.

Should the Commission on Home Ministries ask for an additional $51,000 per year for three years to seek out self-supporting church planters and offer them the needed training and possible help with moving costs?

Proposal 2: Getting equipped for language mission work in North America

To make sure this new leadership search, which would support the work of regional mission committees, furthers our attempt to live the biblical vision for a multiethnic family of God (Isaiah, Acts 10, Acts 15, Revelation 22), we believe it is time to increase language mission work. We are thinking particularly of Hispanic and Chinese language church planting, where some leadership has been provided.

For this renewal effort we need to offer the kind of scholarship aid that equips pastoral leadership with training so they can plant Mennonite congregations. If $8,000 is needed each year for one person in the Hispanic leadership program, four people in training would cost $32,000 per year.

Most of the Chinese language work is led by pastors who already have had pastoral leadership training and experience, but seminars to aid them in working with Mennonites in North America have been necessary. Not only translations of printed materials but of radio and TV spots are needed as well as backup work by people serving in MVS.

Should CHM request support for a program costing $92,000 a year for a special effort to meet the needs of new immigrants in North America?

Proposal 3: Enriching evangelism with peace and justice witness

CHM staff have heard the requests for seed money from Mennonite sponsored urban peace centers and interdenominational peace study conferences.

We are aware of the lack of materials for minority groups that need to hear about the testimonies and commitments of Christians in their own ethnic groups that have found nonresistance a way to express their faith more fully.

We also propose a series of evangelism workshops to equip us to reach groups needing further help with peace and justice questions: evangelical Protestants, non-Christians who are pacifists for a variety of reasons, minority Christians, Roman Catholics, non-churched students and many other groups in North America. These workshops need to include follow-up help for converts entering Mennonite congregations or starting new congregations.

Radio spot preparation

Also needed are evangelism training packets and radio and TV resources to help us be as ready as possible for the new interest in peace and the bridge this can be for a deeper walk with Jesus Christ.

Should CHM ask for $57,000 a year for an expanded witness for the next three years?

Proposal 4: Evangelism training event

To back up the kind of church planting and evangelism thrust needed we propose that early in 1985 the already discussed inter-Mennonite evangelism training event be made a priority for every congregation. We want to gather the best resources from Mennonite and non-Mennonite Christian leadership to equip ourselves for our mission in North America. More money without our own preparation, involvement and commitment is insufficient.

Proposal 5: A building costs support group

Real estate costs in cities where newer congregations form are often too high for a group to finance the borrowing costs. A medium-sized grant can reduce the debt a congregation has to assume to a manageable size and prevent such a group from having to take away its energies from outreach priorities.

A solution to these high costs is now being proposed for a three-year trial basis. It was also approved by many area conference mission committees and the General Board. CHM is now ready to seek out 500 people willing to give $100 when called upon up to twice a year. The $50,000 collected by such an appeal would help new congregations with meetingplace costs.

Since this kind of appeal tends to bypass local congregations, offering plates and budgets, it should be organized so that congregations can include this kind of support in their reports of giving to conference mission causes. It seems important to keep the values of church-to-church assistance as much as possible and have the donors be informed of the kind of church planting mission that's happening and encourage visiting and personal contacts with the new churches getting this kind of financial help.

Would you encourage CHM to move ahead with this kind of special help as a way to encourage our church planting thrust in this triennium? Would you be ready to help locate some of the people who would want to be one of the 500 donors?

VI. Planning

A. The price tag

The above proposal for North American mission work totals an additional $200,000 per year.

The people likely to be reached would be middle-class people like ourselves. The kind of people in poverty which we have related to through the efforts of some 500 MVS workers in the last triennium would not be reached in any expanded way except for those new immigrants and refugees contacted through language mission efforts.

This is one of the reasons that the proposed effort must be over and above the present budget level so as not to decrease the work done in the 30 communities in which MVS works or that is done by the Mennonite Indian Leaders Council.

The number of MVS applicants is on the rise, as is the call for MVS initiatives in many places. Our church has found ways to stand with and share Christian hope in a variety of poverty, offender and refugee ministries. The new thrust should not diminish our efforts in those areas.

B. God's enabling

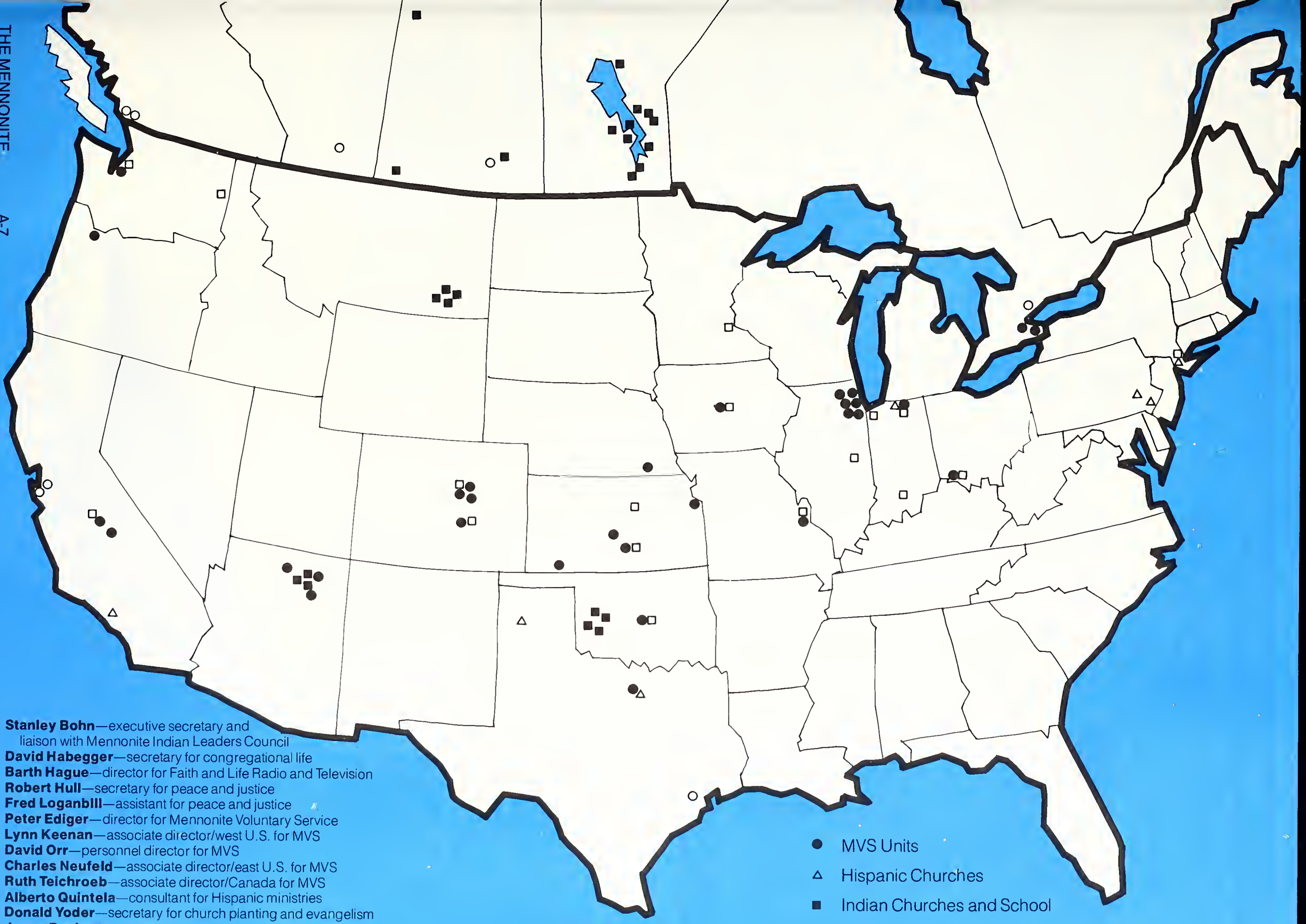
It is not unusual to be critical of our own evangelism approaches, methods and motivations. Much of the scolding may be deserved, but it is not God's purpose for us to be stewing in our frustrations when forgiveness has been given. There is a vision to be lived and abundant Spirit power to live it.

We now have available as never before some resources that will enable us to move from arrogance or timidity to confidence in God's enabling power. For example, we have help from overseas Christians; we are a minority church with continuing immigration experience that can help us understand other minorities.

With the help of our seminary, we have now become more aware of our Mennonite contribution to biblical interpretation, understanding of the church and evangelism. Before the Vietnam War, when many in our society believed we didn't have any worthwhile contribution to make, those views took their toll on our members, and many of us became embarrassed about the peculiarities of our peace teachings and our lack of trust in those governments that gave us refuge.

As we have done more Bible study, we have been able to witness with more confidence. Churches overseas have expressed appreciation for a gospel separated from the North American way of life and further confirmed the vision. It seems clearer than ever what our contribution is to God's mission in North America and the urgency it carries.

Shall we move with these proposals and see what the Lord makes possible? *CHM staff*


● MVS Units
△ Hispanic Churches
■ Indian Churches and School
○ Asian Churches
□ Peace Centers

Stanley Bohn—executive secretary and liaison with Mennonite Indian Leaders Council
David Habegger—secretary for congregational life
Barth Hague—director for Faith and Life Radio and Television
Robert Hull—secretary for peace and justice
Fred Loganbill—assistant for peace and justice
Peter Ediger—director for Mennonite Voluntary Service
Lynn Keenan—associate director/west U.S. for MVS
David Orr—personnel director for MVS
Charles Neufeld—associate director/east U.S. for MVS
Ruth Teichroeb—associate director/Canada for MVS
Alberto Quintela—consultant for Hispanic ministries
Donald Yoder—secretary for church planting and evangelism
Joyce Pankratz—secretary
Esther Rinner—administrative assistant
Jane Schmidt—secretary

Commission on Education

. . . "Did
not our
hearts burn
within us as
he talked to us
on the road and
explained the
scriptures to us?"
Luke 24:32 Jerusalem Bible

We are a people on a journey—a faith journey. On this road we encounter such words as "disciples," "family," "the Bible," "community." We have been on this road for some time. But even with the familiar landmarks along the road there is a newness about it.

On our journey, as we talk and relate to everyday situations, we rely upon the Scriptures to give us insights and guidelines. The Bible is important to us. We feel a continuous need to increase our biblical understanding. Thus curricula, study guides, books on history and theology are published. There is an urgency about knowing and following Jesus on the road.

We are people with strong family identities. However, there are many situations that place a lot of stress upon marriages, parents, children, singles, aged. Resources to strengthen marriage and family relationships are available. Leadership is provided in a number of areas from childhood to old age.

Worship, Christian education, colleges and Bible schools, decision making on current issues all are vital to our congregational life. We are the church together. We need church-related colleges and Bible schools, community support, meaningful worship, Bible studies to help make the journey a joyful and vital one for us.

We are followers of Jesus Christ. Disciples. A people on a journey whose faith makes all the difference in the world. Ah, "our hearts (still) burn within us as he talks to us on the road."

The Foundation Series now reaches all ages with the Word of God

As Christian parents and congregations we are concerned about the destiny of the children, youth and adults. Will the individuals be knowledgeable about the Bible, will they understand it and sense how it applies to life and eternity? Will our children have opportunities to interact with adult Christians who freely share their faith? Will our children and youth perceive a style of mission and discipleship that reflects our biblical understandings? Will the children, youth and adults come to a firm faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord?

Since the introduction of the children's material in 1977 many have experienced exciting times of Bible study and learning. *The Foundation Series* is biblical. It affirms that the Bible is God's written Word, it affirms that the Holy Spirit is active when teaching takes place. *The Foundation Series* is life related. It is concerned about the way children grow and learn, about their relationships in the congregation and about living as followers of Jesus in the world. Through a variety of materials children have been helped to discover the life and mission of the church. It has brought about opportunities for adult-child interaction so that together they discover what it means to be a follower of Jesus—to be in the world but not of it.

During this past triennium *The Foundation Series* was expanded to provide materials for youth and adults. *The Foundation Series for Youth* is a four-year ungraded curriculum. *The Foundation Series for Adults* is a two-year Anabaptist core curriculum which is offered concurrently with the *Uniform Series*. After the two years are completed the material will continue to be available as a series of electives. *The Foundation Series* curriculum has a balanced emphasis for all ages on Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, on atonement and discipleship, on inner peace and among all people, on the individual and the communal dimensions of Christian life, on the present and future reality of the kingdom of God. These are central themes in an Anabaptist understanding of the Scriptures. The curricu-

Goal 1
To increase biblical understanding

lum is guided by the motto: "For no other Foundation can anyone lay, than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (1 Corinthians 3:11).

Study materials on developmentally disabled available in 1983

A task force composed of representatives from the publishing and cooperating bodies of *The Foundation Series* met initially in the spring of 1980 and subsequently in November 1980 and January 1982.

Application to MMA for funds to develop a number of written materials was made. A grant of $16,500 was given to develop the following materials, all of which are in different stages of production at this time.

(1) Study book with a leader's guide—an 11-chapter book written by a number of writers, edited by Aldred Neufeldt—to raise awareness of mentally handicapped persons in our congregations. Leader's guide—written by Dennis and Nancy Becker. Release date—summer 1983.

(2) Teacher training manual—written by Jane Toews—to help Sunday school teachers integrate the mentally handicapped child in the regular classroom. Release date—summer 1983.

(3) Youth elective—six-session curriculum piece dealing with issues like uniqueness, conformity, self-worth. Wanda Callahan—possible writer. Release date not determined.

(4) Adaptation of *The Foundation Series* Grades 3 and 4 material for use by teachers who may have one or more mentally handicapped children in the regular classroom. Eight quarters completed. Frieda Dirks—writer.

The Foundation Series now available in German

As a mandate from the General Conference at Bluffton this Sunday school curriculum was to be made available in the German language. A considerable sum of above-budget funds was needed to make this project possible. The work of translation was done by people in South America. All printing and distribution is the responsibility of the South American conference. Some of this material is being used in Germany, Mexico and Canada.

A Reason to Sing

This student-written devotional booklet edited and illustrated by Terry Stutzman, will be available in August. Congregations and their university students will have opportunity to use this devotional resource as a tool to enhance and stimulate student devotional life. The booklet will be marketed by Faith and Life Press.

Christian service in the helping professions theme for Graduate Seminar

Mennonite Graduate Seminar is offered every other year on an inter-Mennonite basis to graduate students throughout North America. It focuses on a theme pertinent to faith and life, particularly from the graduate student's perspective. The 1982 Mennonite Graduate Seminar was held at Kansas State University on the theme of Christian Service in the helping professions.

Building a New Creation: Partners in Hope Perspective '84 theme

This young adult gathering will be a binational conference targeted for people 20-30 years old. Perspective '84 is sponsored by the three General Conference program commissions. The conference is scheduled to take place at the Leamington Hotel in Minneapolis, Feb. 16-19, 1984. For further information write to Perspective '84, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.

Foundation Series revisions based on user evaluation

Based on user evaluation and the critical evaluation of seven educators representing the publishing partners, a major revision of *The Foundation Series for Children* is in process. The changes will be in the area of methodology; theology and story content, except in a few isolated cases, will not be affected. More consistency in format and design within the grade level is also the object.

Writers for the revision are Vel Shearer (Preschool), Mary Rempel (Kindergarten), Rosella Regier (Grades 1 and 2), Phyllis Martens (Grades 3 and 4), Linea Geiser (Grades 5 and 6), Mary Ebersole (Grades 7 and 8). Editors are Laurence Martin (managing editor); Edna Dyck (Preschool, Kindergarten, Grades 1 and 2); Marjorie Waybill (Grades 3 and 4, Grades 5 and 6); and Glen Pierce (Grades 7 and 8).

The new revised material will be available for publicity in March '84, for use in September '84.

Bible survey coming in 1984

In the next triennium plans are to introduce a new 35-session elective for adults which is a survey of the Bible. Written by Maynard Shelly, the course is designed for self-study, but includes some helps for group process for those who want to study it together.

Bible book study series

Plans are under way for the writing and publishing of a Bible book study series. The intent of the series is to help lay people study the Bible book by book.

Marriage Encounter encounters 864 couples with 18 team couples

Since the beginning of Mennonite Marriage Encounter, 864 couples have attended from eight states and two provinces. A total of 18 team couples are at work. In 1981 cooperation with Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries began. The program is continually being tested and evaluated by participants and team couples. The 1981 consultation took an in-depth look at Mennonite Marriage Encounter to review its history and explore its future shape. Participants took a good look at the theological basis for Marriage Encounter. As a result of this consultation, content and format changes have occurred to better fit the Mennonite constituency.

Marriage Encounter enriching marriages, building strong families

Mennonite Marriage Encounter scheduled 11 weekends in 1982 with a total of 277 couples attending. One of the major goals was to develop a complete team (three lay couples and one pastor couple) in each region in which weekends are currently scheduled. The four regions in which there are team couples and in which weekends are scheduled on a continuing basis are (1) Western (Oregon, Idaho, California), (2) Plains (Kansas), (3) Central (Illinois, Indiana) and (4) Eastern (Ohio, Pennsylvania, Ontario).

In addition to training a complete team in each area, we have been working toward having each region assume most of the responsibilities for scheduling, promoting and planning weekends in coordination with the central office.

Neither statistics nor personal stories alone can communicate adequately the meaning that Marriage Encounter holds for participants. The following are two quotes from couples who have attended:

> "The weekend not only made a profound impact on our marriage relationship, but also on my relationship with all others. I am understanding myself better—the woman, mother, wife, friend, co-worker, etc., and most importantly, the child of God I am and am becoming."
>
> "I felt called to our marriage and affirmed by Marriage Encounter where there was a high view of the marriage covenant—something to be constantly nurtured and celebrated."

Parenting

COE is concerned about the many situations parents face. Growing out of experiences at the family life resource center at the General Conference sessions at Estes Park, Colo., a resource kit for parents was created. To help congregations start a family life resource center of their own, a list of books, magazines and brochures make up an examination kit. This kit can be requested through COE, the CMC Resource Centre or the Women in Mission Office. COE is involved in the publishing of *Rejoice!*, a devotional magazine calling the whole family to worship. A further aid that is available is parenting workshops that can be held at family camps.

"It matters where you scatter" Does it really?

The nuclear family is being dispersed as young adults relocate for employment and academic pursuits. Each year COE administers a census for scattered students and young adults. Information about the mobile young adult is provided to more than 100 contact persons throughout North America who seek to prove, through personal and group contacts, that it matters where you scatter. "It Matters Where You Scatter" posters that list the contact persons are annually provided to congregations and young adults.

COE to highlight issues of aging

There is a need for education along the entire age spectrum on the process of aging and preparation for aging. Misunderstandings, inaccurate assumptions and stereotypes abound in the public mind. With the help of a Schowalter grant, COE is working with the following objectives: (1) to increase the awareness of people in Mennonite churches on the process of growing older, (2) to encourage churches to evaluate the place of older people in their congregations, (3) to consider further actions which seem appropriate, (4) to produce study materials and other resources to assist congregations in dealing with issues of aging. Old age is often a tragedy. There is a need for understanding the needs of the elderly and of available resources and ways of working with older people who tend to seek independence and security within the framework of a trusted community—the church.

Requests keep coming for Marriage Encounter weekends

New areas are requesting this weekend experience. For 1983 and 1984 these include Alberta, Oklahoma and Illinois. Several tentative inquiries have come from Nebraska and Arizona. For further information on these weekends or inquiry about Mennonite Marriage Encounter, contact the Commission on Education.

Premarriage manual to aid in counseling and training

"Communication is both simple and complex," says Glen Horst. He further states, "In its simplest form communication occurs when two people express their thoughts, feelings or experiences to each other and listen to each other for the purpose of understanding. Because we are created as social beings, every person feels a need to communicate with others. People enter marriage with the hope of fulfilling this need in a deep and personal way." The proposed premarriage manual is intended to be a tool for the pastors in their counseling and

Goal 2
To strengthen families

training opportunities. The manual will contain (1) a section on why do premarriage training, (2) a section on skill development for young couples (e.g. communication, conflict management), (3) some models.

Congregational student aid may just be the answer

A survey indicates that there are more than 35 congregational aid programs in the United States and Canada among GC congregations. Congregations realize the importance of Mennonite church schools and are increasingly establishing congregational student aid programs for members who attend these schools. A Congregational Student Aid packet is available to help congregations develop and strengthen church student scholarship/bursary programs.

Project: Teach

An experience-based learning opportunity for people involved in the Christian education ministry of the church, it is generally a five-day intensive, live-in teaching, learning experience. The purpose is to deepen individual commitment to Christ through Bible study and worship, to develop an appreciation for the Anabaptist view of the church, to create understanding of the impact of Anabaptist theology upon the interpretation of Scripture and the understanding of human nature, to help teachers acquire a basic understanding of children and adults and the teaching task, to develop skills in using *The Foundation Series* and the *Uniform Series*, to involve teachers in creative teaching process and to make the resources of educational institutions available to congregations. One participant said "I have learned very much and thank you for having it. . . .Thanks for bringing me closer to the Lord Jesus, my Savior."

Minister's manual

The Commission on Education in cooperation with the committee on the ministry has processed a revision of the minister's manual. After the completion of this revision the Mennonite Church expressed interest in making this a cooperatively published product. With some further revision this manual, which originally appeared as a General Conference product, will appear published jointly by Mennonite Publishing House and Faith and Life Press. A further step in cooperative publishing efforts of the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church.

The Mennonite Story: a study for youth and adult

In the writing of this study Rudy Baergen has provided a course that helps strengthen the church community. The study has been written so that both youth and adults can grow in their understanding of the Anabaptist/Mennonite faith development. Many throughout the conference have found this study helpful as an elective as well as part of the catechism studies.

The Worship Series prepared to help plan church worship

The revelation of God is still real, enriched by almost 2,000 years of adoration and by new insights that come every day. In Christian communities we feel drawn to rejoice, share and pray as we respond to God's love in our generation.

The booklets in the Worship Series relate to the worship of the church. It is the hope of the Commission on Education that in creation and expression worship will become more and more a work of the people. These booklets are designed to be used by all who participate in the planning and leading of worship services.

During this past triennium the following booklets have appeared: *Church Music and Worship Among the Mennonites* (#8), *Prayer in Corporate Worship* (#9), *Worship in Children's and Youth Groups* (#10), *Involving Children in Congregational Worship* (#11), *Worship Resources* (#12), *Ordination, Licensing and Installation* (#13). In addition three volumes of a handbook to *The Mennonite Hymnal* have been published, *Exploring the Mennonite Hymnal: Essays* (#7A), *Exploring the Mennonite Hymnal: Handbook* (#7B), and *Hymn Singing* (#7C). May the presence of Christ be experienced as these booklets help in the preparation for worship.

Intergenerational learning growing alternative for summer quarter

The Commission on Education has continued to work on producing material for intergenerational settings. The need for this type of material grows each year. *Celebrate* by Bertha Harder (1980) is a collection of resources for intergenerational celebration of Christmas and Easter. *The Law of Love* by Edna Dyck (1981) is an intergenerational guide for *The Foundation Series*, Grade 7 and 8, year 2, quarter 4. The most recent, *Intergenerational Learning in the Church* by Bertha Harder and Marlene Kropf (1983), is for groups who are ready to try something new—intergenerational education, that is, teaching and learning in a group that includes several generations of people.

Need help? Call your area resource person

The decentralization of *The Foundation Series* began in August 1981. Each district/province education committee has been asked to appoint a person who would be willing to service the series—answer questions, introduce new materials, conduct workshops, etc. The resource people received a complete set of curricula at the outset and are contacted by mail each month. They are asked to report to the COE office on a monthly basis.

Resource people are Helen Brown, Alberta; Anne Funk, David Wilson, British Columbia; Charlotte Hurst, Jo Ropp, Central; Mary Lou Cummings, Marjorie Geissinger, Eastern; Rick Friesen, Helen Unrau, Manitoba; Janelle Ortman, Northern; Helen Reusser, Ontario; Mark Yoder, Pacific; J. W. Sprunger, Saskatchewan; Helen C. Coon, Western.

Christian education leadership

The question of Christian education leadership development in the congregation is an ongoing concern. COE is continually looking at ways to challenge people for leadership in this ministry of the church. Some thought is being given to the development of a leadership training certificate course with the following components: (1) Bible survey course to give good background material to lay church workers, (2) *The Mennonite Story* augmented with slides and films to provide Mennonite history background, (3) Bible book studies to learn Bible study methodology, (4) teacher training courses now prepared for *The Foundation Series* or Project: Teach offer an excellent opportunity to take a teacher training course. Your responses are invited to such a Christian education leadership course.

Requests have come for Project: Teach

Requests for these teaching/learning experiences have come from Ontario to be held in 1984. Also interest has been expressed by Christian education people from Saskatchewan and Eastern District to consider plans for 1985. These opportunities will be announced as dates are set. Watch for further developments.

Goal 3
To strengthen church community

Voluntary service team leads teacher training workshops in outlying congregations

Through Women in Mission, the Commission on Education is to receive aid to create a voluntary service team to lead teacher training workshops in outlying congregations. This team would be equipped to help local congregations understand *The Foundation Series* and give them help in the use of the curriculum. This will make it possible for these congregations to experience the how-to's in their own settings. The workshops would be geared to help small classes and sometimes multilevel classes. The availability of the team would not be based on whether or not the congregation uses *The Foundation Series*. The aim would be to give exposure to *The Foundation Series*, help equip teachers, to encourage and create an excitement in the teaching ministry.

Telling stories has an evangelistic motive

Storytelling is an important method of Christian education. The story is often the content of our teaching. The story of God's people incorporates the activity of God with the activity of people. The stories of the faith are told to invite people to enter the faith. The projected storytelling workshops are planned to teach people the art of storytelling. This art can find creative expression in worship, Christian education and other settings to rally people to a faith in Jesus Christ. The ways to use stories are almost limitless. The Commission on Education is compiling a list of people who are storytellers and could help this special ministry of the church. If you are a storyteller or you know of such, please send the name and addresses to COE.

Christian education leadership priority (urgent)

The Commission on Education continues to emphasize the importance of Christian education in the congregation. The commission is exploring ways to cooperate with Mennonite Biblical Seminary in the specific training of Christian education leadership.

Worship and arts festival targeted for June 1985

Plans are under way for a worship and arts festival. The task force for the event has been appointed. Three purposes are being considered: (1) provide resources to help shape congregational worship, (2) educate church people concerning artistic expression, (3) promote development of district/provincial worship and arts committees. In planning for this event, several Anabaptist presuppositions surface: (1) the centrality of Christ and Scripture, (2) silence, (3) everything being brought under concern for kingdom living. God created; in his image we create. We create out of our experience with God. When we talk about faith we focus on God's work of salvation. When we talk about art we focus on God's work of creation. The central goal for COE planning a worship and arts festival is to help local worshiping communities to experience, "Did . . . not our hearts burn within us as he talked to us . . ."

The Mennonite Heritage Film Series

This is a series of documentary films dealing with the history of the Anabaptist/Mennonite movement and seeking to communicate its understandings of the Christian faith. Six films are planned; two are now available: (1) *Anabaptist Beginnings* (now available), (2) *The Faith Moves Eastward*, (3) *Mennonites Come to North America* (now available), (4) *Mennonites in Latin America*, (5) *Sharing the Faith* and (6) *The Anabaptist/Mennonite Challenge Today*. The two films are available at $225 each, or if you buy both together the cost is $395.

Mennonite history slide sets

A series of seven slides sets has been designed so that it is easy to use in a wide variety of settings and with a number of curriculum pieces. The seven sets are (1) "Sixteenth Century Anabaptism," (2) "The Bloody Theater or Martyrs Mirror," (3) "Mennonite Conscientious Objectors During World War I and World War II," (4) "Indian Missions: General Conference Mennonite Church," (5) "Overseas Missions: General Conference Mennonite Church," (6) "Mennonite World Conference," (7) "Mennonites in Russia: the Old Colony, Khortitza." The set of seven can be purchased for $125.

"Faith Development in the Adult Life Cycle"

This is an interdenominational research project in which MCs and GCs are cooperating with over 20 other denominations and groups. Phases of research include quantitative research by the Gallup Organization, qualitative research under the direction of Connie Leean, and the publication of books for church workers in education, counseling, preaching, etc. Little research has been done so far to explore the relationship between the adult life cycle and faith development. The first book of the project is off the press: *Faith Development in the Adult Life Cycle* (New York: Sadlier, 1983), edited by Kenneth Stokes, director of the project.

PEACE program shares gospel

The Peace Education As Campus Evangelism (PEACE) program has provided leadership resources for urban and university congregations. It is helping these congregations to evaluate and resource their ministry for a more effective means of sharing the gospel.

Christian writers' workshop

The Commission on Education with *The Mennonite* sponsored a writers' workshop at Bluffton (Ohio) College in April 1982. Nine people received travel scholarships totaling $2,000 from the commission's writer's fund.

Books by outstanding authors help develop effective disciples

A goal of the Commission on Education is to seek out manuscripts for publication which help develop effective disciples. *Czars, Soviets and Mennonites* by John Toevs (1982) is the story of the Mennonite experience in Russia from the turn of the century to World War II. *Still in the Image* by Waldemar Janzen (1983) is a collection of articles on biblical theology and anthropology. *Prairie People* by David Haury (1981) is a history book published for the Western District Conference. *Pilgrimage of a Congregation* by Naomi Lehman (1983) is the history of First Mennonite Church in Berne, Ind. Effective disciples continually search for that which helps in the further development of the community of faith in which we find ourselves. As these needs are known, manuscripts are sought or writers assigned to meet the needs of our growing faith community.

A new venture for COE in publishing books

A new venture for the Commission on Education through its publisher, Faith and Life Press, in 1980-83 has been the publication of several books for children. *Peace Be With You* (1981), a collection of peace stories by Cornelia Lehn, has been an excellent witness for peace both within the General Conference family and to the wider English-reading community. *Sara's Trek* by Florence Schloneger (1981) tells of the dangerous journey of a young refugee from Russia to Poland, Germany and Canada. The main plot of *The House at the Back of the Lot* by Helen Coon (1982) deals with Ellen's attempt to win a school art contest; a strong component of the story is her coming to terms with a family and a lifestyle that is different from those around her. *The Sun and the Wind* by Cornelia Lehn, illustrated by Robert Regier (1983), is the retelling of an Aesop Fable as a peace story. *I Heard Good News Today* by Cornelia Lehn (1983) is a collection of mission and service stories.

In search of women's stories

COE has received a Schowalter grant to help in the research and writing of about 30 women's stories. The search for the raw material is now in progress. You are invited to share

names, diaries, journals or source materials to make this project possible. This follows *Full Circle*, the book of biographies edited by Mary Lou Cummings.

The gospel, economics the Christian and the church

The businessperson functions at one of the most critical points where faith and culture meet. Economics is an area of our life which is an integral part of our existence but which the church seldom addresses directly. Though ours is essentially a business culture, we rarely have the opportunity to discern within the context of the congregation how faith and economics are to interact with integrity. There is a real need for us to discover how to integrate biblically based values with those of professional management and business leadership. The study materials to be prepared will work at the following objectives: (1) to focus on biblical teaching that relates to economic and management issues, (2) to deal with the integration of biblically based values with those of professional management and business leadership and (3) to develop an understanding of some basic business and management concepts and their relevance in the marketplace and in the church. A course is planned to be available by September 1985.

Anabaptist heritage maps

A set of 135 maps has been created under the supervision of Jan Gleysteen. These are specialized maps that can be customized according to specific requests. These maps are made possible through a grant from the Schowalter Foundation and help from the Commission on Education. They are being cooperatively prepared by Mennonite Publishing House and Faith and Life Press.

Goal 4
To develop more effective disciples

Women In Mission

Love must be completely sincere. Hate what is evil, hold on to what is good. Love one another warmly . . . be eager to show respect for one another. Work hard . . . serve the Lord with a heart full of devotion. Let your hope keep you joyful . . . pray at all times. Share your belongings with your needy fellow Christians and open your home to strangers (Romans 12:9-13 NEB).

With the dawn of the eighties, Women in Mission set forth eight goals to be highlighted during the decade:

1. Foster spiritual growth among members. WM recognizes that the inward journey is necessary if the outward journey is to be effective. Through study and prayer groups, retreats and special conferences, through the efforts of the literature committee and our *Window to Mission* editor, groups are challenged to grow in spiritual maturity.

2. Strengthen relationships with women abroad. In 1978, the Women's World Outreach fund was born out of a desire to financially assist international Mennonite women preparing for Christian service. Assistance during the triennium was given to women from India, Taiwan, Japan, Hong Kong, Colombia, Brazil and Africa. Most of these studied in the context of their own culture; however, some came to North America. Leah Sonwani from India is one of those who is studying at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Ind.

Money was also budgeted to assist Third World women to attend Mennonite World Conference in 1984.

Several WM-related visits overseas took place. Lora Oyer, president, traveled to Zaire and participated in the Mennonite World Conference planning session in Nairobi. Elsie Flaming, Canadian vice president, and Joan Wiebe, coordinator, visited national women and missionaries in General Conference mission areas in Japan, Taiwan and Hong Kong. Jeanne Zook,

Joan Wiebe (right) and Elsie Flaming (third from right) visit women in Taiwan.

our WM Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission representative, participated in medical work for two months in Zaire.

3. Assist women in developing their gifts. Efforts at discernment of gifts were made through a talent bank survey done on the conference and district level. Through this, it was possible to identify people with various gifts, skills and interests. Women have also been encouraged to attend leadership training workshops and seminars.

Over the years WM has been a training ground for leadership which has led to fuller participation in our churches and conference. WM has representation on the three commissions, the seminary and AIMM boards, peace and justice reference council, Faith and Life Radio and Television and the MCC U.S. Peace Section. This represents a broad spectrum of participation with mutual benefits to all concerned.

Scholarship assistance is given yearly to General Conference women at AMBS. Scholarships to minority women and AMBS interterm scholarships given to pastors' wives convey a "we care about you" message.

4. Relate to the hurting and lonely. Reports of yearly activities of 10,000 "women in mission" who are organized into 420 groups in Canada and the United States substantiate the fact that there is a heightened sensitivity to the needs of the next-door neighbor as well as the global community. Listening, sharing belongings, opening homes to strangers, feeding the hungry and tying comforters is kingdom work.

5. Strengthen family and marriage relationships. Financial and moral support was given to Mennonite Marriage Encounter. In cooperation with COE, traveling Parenting Kits were made available for perusal by congregations. Since we believe firmly in peace education, which must begin in the home, we also assembled a Peace Kit for children and adults which is available upon request.

6. Unite efforts to improve television. We cooperated with Faith and Life Radio and Television in placing media spots on radio and television. We also helped identify and train Television Awareness Training leaders in our conference who helped many of us recognize the subtle and devastating ways television can influence our lives.

7. Encourage more communication among women's groups, districts and Mennonite conferences. The WM network serves well in disseminating information, accomplishing projects and raising issues and concerns in our organization. District advisers and presidents serve ably as liaison persons in this network.

Special emphasis by staff, the executive committee and council members was given to visiting local groups and attending retreats and district conferences. WM and General Board sponsored a visit by Jeannie and Marv Zehr to 32 geographically isolated churches in the United States and Canada.

Dialogue began with the committee on women concerned, made up of women not a part of the traditional women's organization milieu.

Joint district conferences with the Mennonite Church presented opportunities for sharing in new ways.

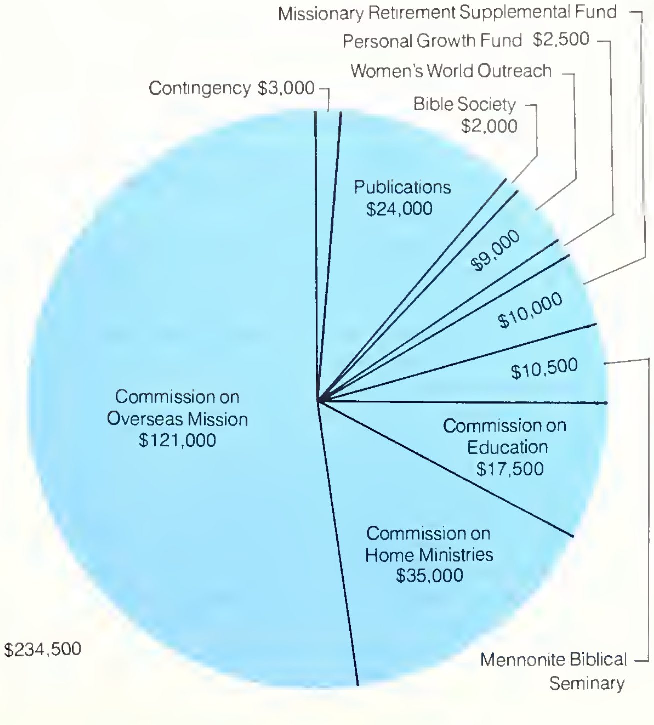
8. Continue financial support of local, district and General Conference related ministries. For the first time in WM history, in 1981 and again in 1982, the combined financial and material aid giving topped the $1 million mark. While a good share of the budget money is proportionately divided among the three commissions and seminary, a certain amount is used to promote Women's World Outreach, a commissioned book for children and our own publication, *Window to Mission*, which appears six times a year in *The Mennonite*. It serves as a vital link to the WM constituency as well as *The Mennonite* readership in general.

AIMM is still the recipient of a share of material aid; however, Mennonite Voluntary Service units and some of our intercultural churches were also assisted in this way.

Since the mission education of children has been a concern over the years, Cornelia Lehn was commissioned to write a book of mission and service stories. Entitled *I Heard Good News Today*, this book should be a valuable resource for parents, pastors and teachers.

We pray that Women in Mission will continue to be empowered to act out love and service to others and God. *Joan Wiebe, coordinator*

Lora Oyer (fourth from left) attends MWC planning session in Nairobi, Kenya.


Missionary Retirement Supplemental Fund
Personal Growth Fund $2,500
Women's World Outreach
Contingency $3,000
Bible Society $2,000
Publications $24,000
$9,000
$10,000
$10,500
Commission on Overseas Mission $121,000
Commission on Education $17,500
Commission on Home Ministries $35,000
$234,500
Mennonite Biblical Seminary

Mennonite Biblical Seminary

During the past triennium, events at the seminaries have increasingly been concerns of joint rather than separate interest. Among the developments common to Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries have been the following:

Enrollment has steadily increased.

Enrollment Statistics	1980	1981	1982
Total AMBS fall enrollment	210	240	231
Total MBS fall enrollment	72	84	92
MBS women students	22	30	29
MBS Canadian students	18	21	24

The number of non-Mennonites has also steadily increased. Over the past five years 20 percent of AMBS students have come from churches other than Mennonite. Seminary students today tend to be older. The average age is over 30 and a higher proportion of students are married. More women are working toward degrees with the intention of serving either as part of a team or solo pastors. In 1982-83 there were approximately 50 preschool children of seminary students on campus.

The black and Hispanic ministries program, in cooperation with Goshen (Ind.) College, is now beginning its fifth year. The January annual interterm and the pastors' workshops are continuing to meet needs of many pastors.

The conference-based seminary program is taking root and appears to have prospects for growth and long-term usefulness. It is now functioning in Ontario, Pennsylvania and Kansas and may expand to other segments of the constituencies. Of special significance during the past triennium have been the strong emphases on developing Christian community and spiritual formation. Two faculty members are devoting part time to the cultivation of spiritual discipline among students and faculty.

Items of particular interest to supporters of MBS are changes in faculty and administration. Jacob Elias has been appointed AMBS dean. Leland and Bertha Harder, after 25 years of faithful service, have terminated their relations with the seminary and have moved to North Newton, Kan. New additions to the faculty have been Ted and Gayle Koontz in ethics and theology, respectively.

The triennium ahead. The MBS board of trustees has authorized the appointment of a successor to Erland Waltner in the field of preaching. The appointment is to be effective in the fall of 1984. It has also authorized the administration to find a successor to Jacob Enz in the field of Old Testament. Enz has been on the MBS faculty since 1954 and becomes eligible for retirement during the coming triennium.

There is an urgent need for additional campus housing for its growing student body, both single and married students. A coexistent need is for space for 50 preschool children of parents who are full- or part-time students. Such facilities should be ready for use no later than the fall of 1984.

A historical note. At this historic conference friends of MBS may do well to take a quick look back to be reminded of efforts at seminary education during the past century. MBS came to life in Chicago in 1945. It operated there for 13 years in affiliation with Bethany Biblical Seminary, operated by the Church of the Brethren. In 1958 it moved to Elkhart, Ind., on its own newly acquired, 50-acre campus. There it began a cooperative relationship with Goshen College Biblical Seminary, then located on the Goshen College campus. In 1969 GBS bought half interest in the MBS buildings and grounds and moved to Elkhart to make closer cooperation possible. A common curriculum and library were developed, and a single dean, business manager and librarian installed. Administration is carried on by a three-person committee consisting of the two presidents and the dean. This arrangement has worked well.

Witmarsum Theological Seminary (1921-31) was the parent of MBS. Its closing in 1931 was intended to be only temporary, but the Depression and World War II prevented its reopening. Its board of trustees never disbanded, hence it was the body that brought MBS into existence in 1945.

Wadsworth Institute (1868-78) at Wadsworth, Ohio, was the predecessor to Witmarsum and the grandparent of MBS. It had its beginning during the Civil War and during the great immigration of Mennonites from Russia in the 1870s. Even though it existed only a decade, it trained over 200 students and introduced Mennonites in America to a theologically trained ministry, the concepts of missions, evangelism and higher education, and was the forerunner to the three General Conference Mennonite colleges.

Freeland Seminary (1848-65) at Collegeville, Pa., was a private school founded by Abraham Hunsicker, a liberal-minded ordained Mennonite minister. The school was not supported by Mennonites officially but some Mennonites attended it. Among them was John F. Funk, the distinguished Mennonite Church leader, editor, publisher and promoter of missions and Sunday schools.

One wonders what might have been the character of American Mennonites in 1983 had their great-grandparents had the vision to make Freeland their own Bible school and seminary. It was sold in 1865 and eventually became what is today Ursinus College, under the control of the German Reformed Church. *J. Winfield Fretz, acting president* gan a building project. The building dedication and first worship service was Sept. 6, 1980. The group chose seven elders and some deacons. Of those now attending, 68 percent are under 30. Bill Derksen is part-time youth pastor. Sunday school, boys and girls' clubs, youth and young adult programs, sharing groups, music, soap making and recreation are activities there. The church, now with 191 members, is a member of the United Mennonite Churches of British Columbia and CMC.

Salina (Kan.) Mennonite Church grew out of a longstanding interest among Mennonites in and around Salina. In 1979 several couples began to gather regularly, and gradually more came. A planning retreat clarified their purpose. With support from Eden Mennonite Church, Moundridge, Kan., and the WDC, the church took shape. A few highlights have included calling full-time pastor Eldon Epp in September 1981, planning retreats, child consecrations, picnics, potlucks, recreation, weekly Sunday morning services, Sunday school, a Mennonite history class and midweek Bible study. A membership service was held Easter Sunday, April 11, 1982, with 25 charter members. The group helps each other with child care, moving, work and fellowship. It serves in MDS, a mother-to-mother ministry, the Salina Peace Coalition and work projects in the community. The church, now with 26 members, belongs to the Western District Conference.

San Francisco Chinese Mennonite Church began in 1980. A group of Christians wanted to serve the Lord and lead people of Chinese background to Christ. Joshua So and Stephen Lee provided leadership. Pacific District Conference supported the effort. The first Sunday service was on Nov. 9, 1980. They have about 65 people in their regular Sunday service. They also have weekly Bible study, youth activities, and children and adult choirs. An evangelism meeting was held July 9-10, 1982, and an election of church leadership that summer. The 40 members are regularly involved in other Mennonite activities, including annual meetings of the PDC, which they have joined.

Santa Clara (Calif.) Ethnic Chinese Mennonite Church started with a worship service in Adam and Jeanette Liu's home on March 10, 1981. By September the 25 people involved were using the Santa Clara Christian Church building for their Sunday service. A "birthing service" was held Nov. 29, and 19 people were baptized on Dec. 27. By February 1982 they had 50-60 people attending but had to change facilities; they've tried four different places since then. Finally a Mennonite Brethren congregation with a vision to reach Southeast Asian refugees suggested working together. More people were baptized in 1982. The church, with a membership of 40, has a young people's meeting with about 25 people, a Sunday service with about 80, a Sunday school, and is a member of the Pacific District Conference.

Saskatoon Pleasant Hill Mennonite Church began as a Sunday school mission outreach of First Mennonite Church in 1928 by a University of Saskatchewan student, Benno Toews. A variety of leaders served the fellowship, helping with worship and other activities. The church organized as an independent congregation with 21 charter members on April 20, 1958. The first pastor, Ben H. Fast, began July 30, 1958. First Mennonite Church donated property and building, then withdrew its financial support, giving the new congregation autonomy. Around 100 now attend Sunday school, while 140 attend the worship service. They have a women's group, a men's prayer breakfast, Pioneer Girls, a boys' Christian Service Brigade, a choir, smaller singing groups, weekday Bible study and a youth group. In summer worship services for campers are held in a provincial park. Peter E. Funk is pastor of this church's 150 members. The church is a member of the Conference of Mennonites in Saskatchewan and CMC.

Spokane (Wash.) Mennonite Fellowship agreed to organize Sept. 17, 1980. Twelve members signed the covenant of mutual commitment on Feb. 1, 1981. That was preceded by three years of informal monthly gatherings and nine months of organized weekly meetings in Nick and Barb Kassebaum's home. Now 30-40 people gather for a Sunday evening meeting featuring fellowship, worship and study. They rent facilities from St. Paul's United Methodist Church. Three midweek small groups meet in homes for less formal study and prayer. Their organization centers around a leadership council of four people and committees to direct worship, children's education and social activities. Kassebaum is pastor for the 20-member church, which was admitted into the Pacific District Conference in June 1982.

Springfield Heights Mennonite Church, Winnipeg, was founded in 1964, mostly by new immigrants coming out of Russia during World War II and emigrating to Canada. Some came directly from Germany or via Paraguay or Brazil. Since then many immigrants from the original Mennonite settlers in Paraguay have joined the congregation. The church membership grew quite rapidly. In 1975 a group of about 35 left to form the English-speaking Northdale Mennonite Fellowship. Because of crowded facilities the congregation organized into two congregations. They built another building and arranged parallel programs. As soon as the new congregation had 200 members it became independent in 1978 as the Douglas Mennonite Church. The Springfield Church grew to near 500 again. Their mission is to reach Mennonites of German background in Winnipeg. They also have a slow but steady influx of Mennonites from South America. The pastor is Frank K. Isaac, and the assistant pastor is Karl Fast. The 486-member church is a member of the Conference of Mennonites in Manitoba and CMC.

Toronto Chinese Mennonite Church had its first Sunday worship service April 22, 1979, under the leadership of Thomas Yu. In August the group began meeting in the Danforth and Morningside Mennonite Church. They started Chinese language classes for Canadian-born Chinese children and Sunday school classes. In November, Bible study and prayer meetings began. On Oct. 1, 1979, Winfred and Jean Soong assumed full-time leadership, replacing Yu. Winfred was ordained in the Toronto Mennonite Church on April 27, 1980. In June, 19 people made a covenant commitment at a charter membership service. On Christmas Day 1980 three people were baptized. The first congregational meeting was in June 1981. They have junior group activity, Bible study groups, a young couples' fellowship and an adult fellowship. The 38-member church became a member of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada in 1981 and the Conference of United Mennonite Churches in Ontario in 1982.

Trinity Mennonite Fellowship, Mather, Man., began Nov. 7, 1976, with 39 individuals who came from the Mather Mennonite Church. At first, services were held in the Mather United Church building, but in 1979 a building was purchased in which the church continues to meet. Regular programs include Sunday school, Sunday worship services, Bible study, youth activities and a women's group. A council of nine meets monthly to deal with congregational business. The church's aim and purpose is to create and promote genuine Christian attitudes and Christian living and to minister to the spiritual and physical needs of society. George Toews is pastor. The church, now with 58 members, earlier joined the Conference of Mennonites in Manitoba and CMC.

Rumors about an effort to "eliminate the reading of the gospel on the airwaves of America" are being circulated again, according to Barth Hague, director of Faith and Life Radio and Television. Hague urges pastors and church groups who receive letters about the rumor to ignore them. Certain fundamentalist Christian organizations which refuse to be identified have circulated mailings about an alleged petition to eliminate religious broadcasting in the United States for nearly 10 years. "This may be the biggest hoax in religious broadcasting," according to Hague.

Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg, hosted 170 high school and post-high youth for its annual peace conference March 4-6. The theme "The Future of Peace: Peace Is the Will of God" was introduced by main speaker Rodney Sawatzky, professor at Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, Ont., with a Friday evening presentation entitled "Fear, Hope and Love." The Saturday morning session, as did all main sessions, opened with a Bible study led by a CMBC professor. Sawatzky's presentation, "Hard Heads and Soft Hearts," then urged participants to be prepared to suffer for peace, as exemplified by Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr.

Intensive church planting needed in Sun Belt

Houston (Meetinghouse)—"The Sun Belt is ripe for harvest," declared Allan Yoder to the 60 Mennonite and Brethren in Christ home ministries leaders who gathered in Houston April 11-13 for a Sun Belt strategy consultation.

"But the workers are few, so we are issuing a Macedonian call for help," said Yoder, who is pastor of a Hispanic congregation in Arizona and extension director of the small but fast-growing Southwest Conference of the Mennonite Church.

Consultation participants represented the Mennonite Church, General Conference Mennonite Church, Mennonite Brethren Church and Brethren in Christ Church. They included people, like Yoder, who double as pastor and regional mission leader, and home ministries administrators from various denominational mission agencies. Planned by Mennonite Board of Missions (MC) and Commission on Home Ministries (GC), the event was held at Holy Name Retreat Center—a Roman Catholic ministry—in the heart of the Sun Belt.

Fast-growing Houston itself is a prime target for Mennonite church planting. On hand to greet the consultation participants was the pastor of seven-year-old Houston Mennonite Church and two others who have just been assigned to the city to start Mennonite congregations.

The home ministries leaders first heard how the Southern Baptist Convention has been so successful in the Sun Belt. It is the largest Protestant denomination in North America, with most of its members living in the Sun Belt states, which stretch from Florida to California.

Chester Davidson, a research and planning consultant, said the climate and the economic opportunity of the Sun Belt continue to attract large numbers of people from the north and from Mexico. He noted that the Sun Belt has a high percentage of Hispanics, blacks, American Indians and Asians—many of whom are unchurched and disadvantaged.

"You must develop a careful strategy for reaching the people on the low end of the socioeconomic scale," said Charles Dooley, a church extension field consultant, "because it won't happen naturally." He explained that most denominations tend to rise on the scale and appeal to an increasingly affluent and educated crowd.

Representatives of the four Mennonite and Brethren in Christ churches had a chance to share their success stories and church planting projections. "We are *not* weak on evangelism," insisted Paul Boschman, the Conference of Menno-

Inter-Mennonite Home Ministries Council executive (left to right): Stan Bohn (GC), Sid Harms (MB), Arlene Miller (BIC) and Ray Horst (MC).

The U.S. Department of Education has issued letters to financial aid directors of U.S. colleges announcing that "students applying for federal student financial aid, until further notice are not required, as a condition for receipt of such aid, to provide" proof of registration with Selective Service. This places an earlier act on hold, one which required that all non-registrants applying for federal financial aid be reported. A Minnesota judge's injunction prohibiting DOE and Selective Service from enforcing this action (see *The Mennonite*, March 29, 1983, p. 155) serves as the basis for this directive.

Invitation to singers. A choir will sing a recently commissioned, full-length dramatic oratorio at the Mennonite World Conference in Strasbourg, France, July 24-29, 1984. Rehearsals for *The Abiding Place* will take place in Winnipeg a week before the conference and during the first three days of the conference at Strasbourg. Approximately 50 singers with some experience and fairly good reading ability who can cover their own costs are needed. Singers are invited to inquire about joining this choir by writing to George and Esther Wiebe, c/o CMBC, 600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, MB R3P 0M4, by July 1, 1983.

Mennonite World Fellowship Sunday will be May 22 this year, which is also Pentecost Sunday. MWC executive secretary Paul N. Kraybill suggests that congregations plan a special worship service, using an "MWC Quiz" as a bulletin insert, drawing on the skills and insights of congregational members from other countries or of former missionaries. For resource material write 528 E. Madison St., Lombard, IL 60148.

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nites in Canada's director of evangelism ministries. "For our size, we Canadian Mennonites, for example, far outstrip the Southern Baptists in starting new churches."

Don Yoder, a former Arizona pastor who now serves as a church planting consultant to both the Mennonite and General Conference churches, said he senses great interest by Mennonites in expansion. He distributed a report showing that the MCs and GCs have started 145 congregations since 1977 and that at least another 95—over one-third of them in the Sun Belt—will be planted by 1990.

Probably the session that generated the most interest was a presentation by anthropologists Tom and Margarita Melville. The information they gave was useful for people working with other cultures—especially the various Hispanic American groups.

Allan Yoder and several others formed a Sun Belt Caucus and presented an 11-point statement to the consultation. They called for a shift in mission resources—both money and people—from the heavily populated Mennonite areas in the north to the "front lines" in the Sun Belt.

Participants agreed with the Sun Belt Caucus that the training of church planters and the enrichment of mission pastors already on the job are the most urgent needs but cannot be met alone by the Mennonite seminaries, especially for minorities who have not gone to high school and college and whose first language is not English.

The consultation's findings report reflected consensus that priority should be given to church planting in the Sun Belt. The reasons given were that Mennonite congregations there have great opportunities but few resources, people are in flux and "ripe for harvest," the Sun Belt represents a fresh chance for inter-Mennonite cooperation, and millions of people—including Mennonite retirees and young professionals—are moving to the area.

Several participants urged church planters not to forget the Mennonite emphases on peace and discipleship. "Peace should be an essential part of our salvation message," said Brian Laverty of Ontario and Quebec Conference of the Mennonite Church. "And our peace message must include a call for justice for minorities," added Joy Lovett of the Afro-American Mennonite Association.

Several people said that peace and discipleship concerns actually attract newcomers. Ernst Harder of Dallas said the new peace center sponsored by the Mennonite congregation in his city is giving good visibility to Mennonites and providing an excellent witness. The director of the center receives numerous invitations to speak to various groups.

In true more-with-less style, the Mennonite leaders made the most of their time in Houston by scheduling half-a-dozen other meetings and many informal get-togethers.

The Inter-Mennonite Home Ministries Council, for example, held its meeting prior to the Sun Belt consultation. "The main issue before us is how we can best work together in church planting and evangelism in the 1980s," said chairman Ray Horst of the Mennonite Church. "We want to strengthen cooperation, learn from each other and avoid duplication."

Council members agreed by the end of the meeting to strengthen the council's role, sharpen its purpose, and add a representative from the Mennonite Brethren Church—Sid Harms—to its executive committee. Stan Bohn represents the GCs and Arlene Miller represents the Brethren in Christ.

The home ministries leaders, though exhausted, ended their meetings on a crusading note by calling for the formation of a United Mennonite Church. They agreed that this would make church planting, at least, much easier.

The participants burst into applause after Ray Horst presented a proposal for merging the Mennonite denominations. "This would be a bold step," Horst said, "but the historical lines which once divided us are rapidly disappearing."

The group asked Horst to share his proposal and their feelings with the moderators of the Mennonite denominations prior to the joint MC/GC convention in Bethlehem, Pa., in August. "When we get to Bethlehem we want to do more than just sing together," said Don Yoder. *Steve Shenk*

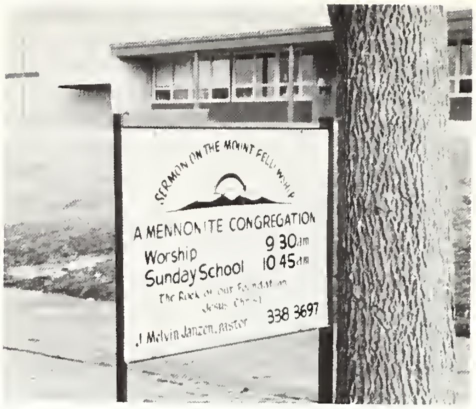
Associated Church Press lauds cover design

Sportack's design

Boston (GCMC)—The Associated Church Press awarded *The Mennonite* its top honors in the two-color category at this year's annual ACP convention in Boston April 11-14.

The award-winning entry ran as the cover of the July 6, 1982, issue, and was designed by Laura Sportack of Peace Mennonite Church, Richmond, B.C. It portrays a modern TV viewer reaching, finger outstretched, toward his television set, while in the background hangs a detail from Michelangelo's "Creation," in which the hands of Adam and God are in close proximity. The issue dealt, in part, with Television Awareness Training. ACP numbers more than 130 periodicals.

A new beginning, another chapter for the Sermon on the Mount Fellowship of Sioux Falls, S.D., took place on Feb. 20. After five years of meeting in the chapel of the First United Methodist Church in Sioux Falls, Sermon on the Mount Fellowship moved to the gymnasium of Calvin Christian School, located on the east side of the city. Time limitations at the chapel and further program development by the Methodists prompted Sermon on the Mount Fellowship to look for another meeting place. The first service at Calvin Christian School was celebrated as "a new beginning," using 2 Corinthians 5:17 as the theme.


SERMON ON THE MOUNT FELLOWSHIP
A MENNONITE CONGREGATION
Worship 9 30am
Sunday School 10 45am
J Melvin Janzen, Pastor 338 3697

A new beginning for Sermon on the Mount Fellowship at Calvin Christian School

"Beyond Legality: The Reconciling Community" was a workshop held March 18-19 at the Nutana Park Mennonite Church in Saskatoon. Keynote speaker Howard Zehr of Mennonite Central Committee's Office of Criminal Justice in Elkhart, Ind., talked about what it means for the church to go beyond legality and legalism and to become reconcilers in the criminal law and corrections system. After focusing on the experiences of victims and offenders in a criminal assault situation, Zehr presented a "new paradigm" of response to crime based on the biblical view that restitution and reconciliation are key elements of justice.

Leaders, educators participate in goodwill visit to Middle East

Akron, Pa. (MCC)—A delegation of seven Mennonite educators and church leaders visited Lebanon, Jordan, West Bank, Israel and Egypt March 9-28 in a goodwill visit sponsored by Mennonite Central Committee.

The seminar exchange, in which Mennonites met with Middle East national and religious leaders, was suggested to MCC in 1981 by two Jordanian leaders, a government official and a church leader. They urged a visit in which delegates would hear directly the concerns of Middle East people and then serve as interpreters in North America.

As well as hearing regional concerns, the group's objectives included communicating deep caring for the people and circumstances of the region, supporting groups and individuals who are working seriously at peaceful ways to solve the region's problems, and listening to the churches in the region.

The group also visited MCC workers and MCC-associated projects. Four of the delegates have served in leadership positions in MCC's Middle East programs. A fifth had earlier lived in West Bank.

In meetings with officials such as Jordan's Crown Prince Hassan and government leaders in Jerusalem and Cairo, tour coordinator Urbane Peachey of MCC spoke for the group: "The world is in the midst of escalating international hostilities. We are alarmed and concerned about the reliance of so many governments upon military solutions.

"We believe that people of goodwill, people of faith, and certainly those who believe in a mighty and merciful God, as do Moslems, Jews and Christians, have a unique moral obligation in this kind of world. We are here to gain a better understanding of the rich heritage of this region and to share our concerns for a more just and peaceful world."

The visit included a two-day seminar on peacemaking with both Israeli and Palestinian participants in Jerusalem. The group reported that in the seminar and throughout their visits in the region they heard "a very deep and broad appeal by Palestinians for a peace process that would include recognition of Israel," as well as a Palestinian homeland.

Mayor Elias Friej of Bethlehem, who participated in the two-day seminar, was one among many who called for Palestinians "to challenge Israel for peace" with proposals leading to mutual and simultaneous recognition. "We cannot continue to live with grudges in our hearts forever," he said.

Freij and others talked with deep concern of an Israeli resettlement plan that will have 100,000 Israelis in the West Bank by the end of 1985. Freij repeated a theme heard elsewhere during the week: "If there are no new developments by the end of 1983 there will be nothing left to negotiate."

The Israeli/Palestinian tensions were also a focus of the group's time in Lebanon, as was Lebanon's physical disruption and the general trauma that hovers over that country.

Both Lebanese and Palestinians suffer great anxiety as the country continues to be under the military control or surveillance of many factions' troops and peacekeeping forces—Israeli, Syrian and Palestinian forces, Israeli-backed Hadaad forces and the U.N. peacekeeping forces made up of seven nationalities.

The delegate participants were LeRoy Friesen, associate professor in peace studies at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Ind.; Harry Heubner, assistant professor of philosophy and theology at Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg, and present associate MCC representative in Jerusalem; William Janzen, director of the MCC (Canada) Ottawa Office; Howard Loewen, associate professor of historical and theological studies at Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary, Fresno, Calif.; Urbane Peachey, executive secretary of MCC Peace Section; Kathryn Seitz, education instructor at Eastern Mennonite College, Harrisonburg, Va.; and Janet Siemens, elementary school educator in Fresno, Calif. *Kristina Mast Burnett*

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The Mennonite Urban Renewal Program, now in its third year of operation, is exploring possibilities for a new housing venture. MURP is a Winnipeg based non-profit association of Mennonite members who are concerned about housing for socially and financially disadvantaged urban people. In its brief history MURP has purchased one small apartment block in the inner-city area, renovated it and leased its 21 units. At a public meeting April 5, two criteria for housing development emerged: (1) provide housing accessible to disabled people and (2) provide housing for large families in the inner city.

Project: Teach, the weeklong, experience-based learning program for church teachers, superintendents and pastors, was held at Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton, Kan., March 21-25. Thirty-seven people from General Conference congregations attended, 17 from the United States and 20 from Canada. Resource persons addressed topics ranging from Bible study to Anabaptist history, while classes were held for teachers of various age levels. 1983 marks the 11th year of Project: Teach. The next such event is planned for Ontario in 1984, although the exact date is still indefinite.

"Towards Wholeness" will be the theme at Camp Assiniboia, west of Winnipeg, on May 15 in an integrated day held by the Handicap Awareness Committee of MCC (Manitoba). Dean Bartel, a consultant with Developmental Disabilities Services in Elkhart, Ind., will speak at the morning service. Afternoon activities will include simulation exercises, indoor games, outdoor volleyball and a hayride. Registration is available through Erna Reimer by calling 204/ 475-3550.

Yoder urges closer relationship with evangelical association

Newton, Kan.—Don Yoder, the General Conference's secretary for church planting and evangelism, didn't feel completely comfortable with some parts of the National Association of Evangelicals' March 8-10 convention in Orlando, Fla.

Like the morning a woman in an elevator, seeing Yoder's NAE badge and having read the morning paper's accounts of the convention's enthusiastic response to President Reagan's militaristic speech at the previous day's plenary session, remarked cheerily, "Oh—you must be one of the President's men."

Not exactly, Yoder replied.

Yet despite some moments of unease, Yoder came away from the three days of meetings convinced that closer relationships between the General Conference and NAE would be of benefit to both organizations. He presented his findings to the General Conference's Commission on Home Ministries staff April 19-22.

"I believe there are significant ways we can benefit from a closer relationship with NAE in both the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church," Yoder reported. "It is significant that at this time Myron Augsburger is moderator-elect for the Mennonite Church and will be serving as moderator during the time that he will also serve on the Board of Administration for NAE. The shape of the relationship with NAE and the various commissions must be an item for further discussion by our boards."

According to Yoder, there is a growing awareness in NAE of the social and service dimensions of the gospel, while peace concerns and the peace witness had a much higher visibility at the convention than he had anticipated.

"Persons from the historic peace churches, such as Ron Sider, John Howard Yoder, Myron Augsburger and others, are being read and listened to. The opportunities for giving witness to the gospel of peace and wholeness are unlimited within NAE. As Mennonites, we must use every opportunity to do so not only in our own Mennonite circles but also among Christians of other denominations, as well as in the broader world that is struggling to find a lasting peace. . . . NAE would also benefit from our peace witness and concern for service ministries. . . ."

Yoder

Yoder, a member of the board of directors of the Arizona Association of Evangelicals (affiliated with NAE), feels that the two NAE organizations that can provide the most resources in areas of Mennonite interest are the Evangelism and Home Missions Association and Evangelical Social Action Commission.

"The purpose of EHMA is cooperative action to accelerate missions in North America. Their interests include lay witness, spiritual revival, church planting and work among immigrants, underprivileged communities, inmates of penal institutions and foreign language groups. The ESAC, on the other hand, serves as an education medium on social needs, maintains contact with evangelical welfare agencies and encourages the application of biblical principles to the needs of the day," he said.

While at the NAE convention, Yoder attended workshops on the influx of immigrants to North America, Nicaragua, ministry to international students and business people, Chuck Colson's prison ministry and the nuclear arms race. Regarding the assembly's response to President Reagan's address promoting a strong national arms program, Yoder felt that the press overrated NAE's enthusiasm. *Larry Cornies*

Bethel College
Music Camp
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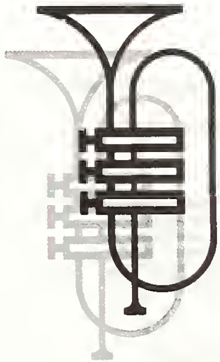

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Registration deadline May 27

The rower pump, designed and developed by Mennonite Central Committee workers in Bangladesh, is now being tested in Thailand. This simple, inexpensive pump enables poor farmers to manually irrigate their small plots of land. Dan Spare of St. John, Kan., former MCC worker in Bangladesh, and MCC workers in Thailand had 125 rower pumps manufactured. Then they and staff from Appropriate Technology Association, a Thai non-governmental organization, placed several demonstration rower pumps in a village about 125 kilometers from Bangkok.

A Bangladeshi farmer uses a rower pump to irrigate a small plot of land.

Festival Quarterly magazine's Summer 1983 issue will feature winners of its Fifth Annual 1983 Photo Contest on the theme "Does It Make a Difference?" Entries must be black and white, include the name, address and phone number of photographer, type of film and camera used, photo title, and a self-addressed envelope with adequate postage for return. Cash prizes will be awarded to winners: first choice—$100; second—$75; third—$50; honorable mention—$25. Submission must be made by May 31 to *Festival Quarterly* Photo Contest, 2497 Lincoln Highway East, Lancaster, PA 17602.

MDS assisting victims of Louisiana, Mississippi flooding

Akron, Pa. (MCC U.S.)—Mennonite Disaster Service has begun clean-up work in Louisiana and Mississippi following mid-April flooding.

Stan Mecum of Des Allemands, Louisiana MDS director, reports that there are four MDS workers in the state—two in Baton Rouge and two in Franklinton—cleaning mud out of houses, removing wet Sheetrock and helping residents return to their homes.

"But we need more help from Mennonites living in the MDS Region II area," he quickly adds, "because the number of Mennonites living in Louisiana is very limited."

Mecum predicts that there will be considerable clean-up work near the town of Franklinton and in the New Orleans East area. "The water has not yet gone completely down in the town of Flidell, but there will most likely be people there needing our help as well," he reports.

So far the work has been limited. "Once the federal government declares which areas are disaster areas, we will have more details about exactly where we can work and what we can do," Mecum reports. He anticipates that MDS will eventually be involved in repair work and some reconstruction, in addition to its clean-up work.

Director of MDS in Mississippi Henry Yoder of Macon, Miss., estimates that 8,000 to 10,000 people in that state have been affected by the flooding. Groups of Mennonites are already working there in several cities.

In Foxworth, Miss., he reports, nearly every home had water damage. Members of the Durban Conservative Mennonite Fellowship in Kokomo, Miss., located a few miles from Foxworth, have been working since April 14 cleaning mud out of houses there. Eight people from the Church of God in Christ Mennonite Church in Macon also helped out in Foxworth.

Hattiesburg is another town that was hard-hit, Yoder says. Many of the local people there are helping each other shovel out the mud, but "they were glad" for the help given by a carload of people from the Magnolia Conservative and the Noxubee Mennonite congregations from Macon.

According to Yoder, the MDS Region II office will be moving within the next week to Columbia, Miss., another city where flooding was extensive. From this location, Virgil Gingrich, Region II MDS director, can monitor the situation more easily and keep in close contact with the National Red Cross, he explains.

The National Red Cross has its central office in Columbia.

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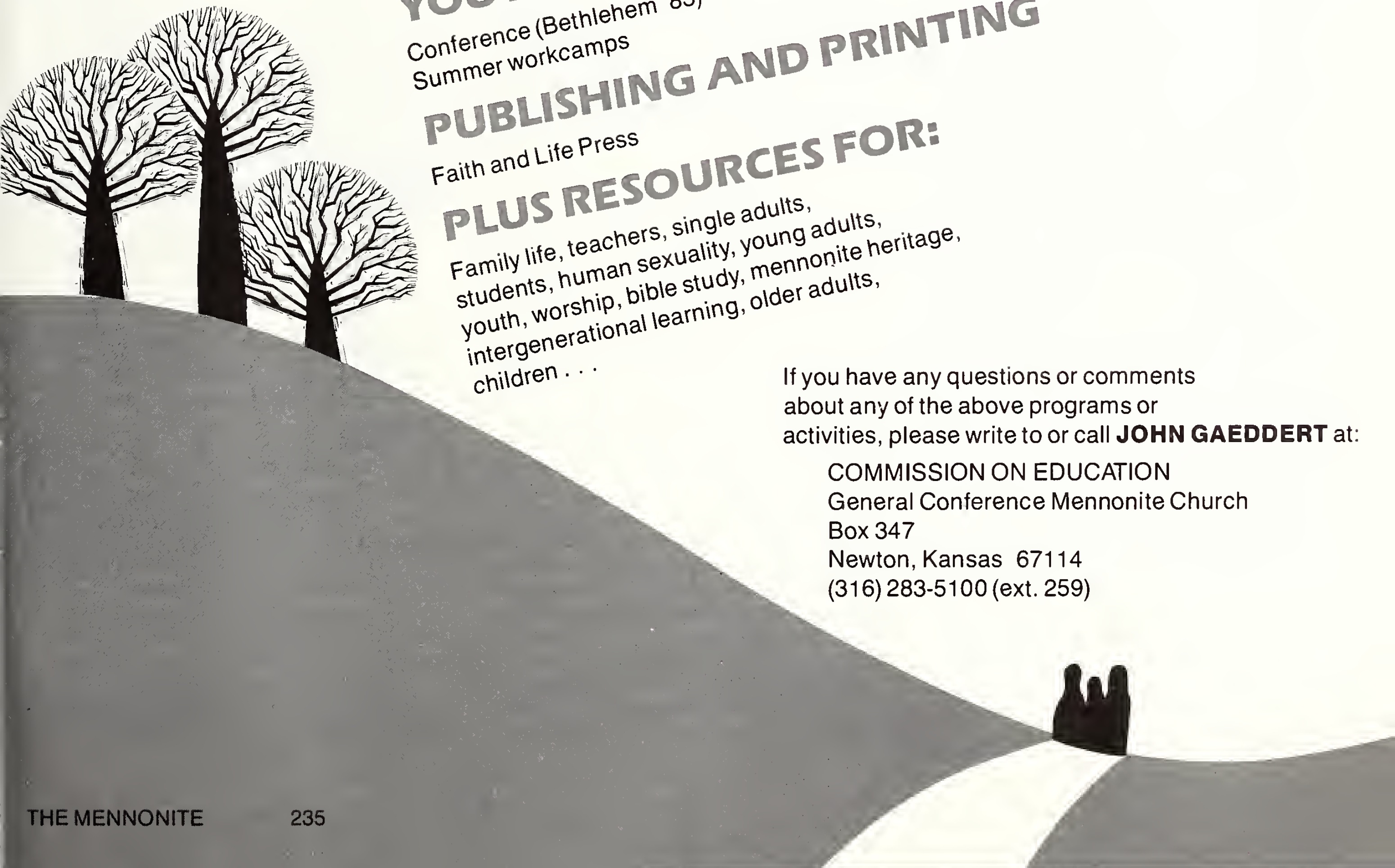


If you have any questions or comments about any of the above programs or activities, please write to or call **JOHN GAEDDERT** at:

COMMISSION ON EDUCATION
General Conference Mennonite Church
Box 347
Newton, Kansas 67114
(316) 283-5100 (ext. 259)

LETTERS

Response to Dennis Webber

Welcome to the fold (April 12 issue, pages 176-77). A bit presumptuous to word it that way, since it's been nearly 15 years since I've regularly worshiped in a Mennonite church (there isn't any in Blair, so my husband and I have joined a Baptist church in town), but I have a soft spot for Mennonites and maintain an associate membership with my old church in Newton, Kan.

I have to agree with the two areas of concern you've listed. I also have a wish that Mennonite church people would reach out to their neighbors so there would be lots of Smiths, Larsens and Gonzaleses along with the Yoders and Friesens and Bullers, but I also wholeheartedly agree with the areas of blessing you've found in the Mennonite churches with which you've been in contact.

So again, though I'm neither pastor nor even regular attender of a Mennonite church, welcome. I'm delighted you have decided to work within the General Conference. *Connie Buller, 1458 Butler, Blair, NE 68008* April 4

Affirms Cornelia Lehn

I commend you for the informative, inspiring COE issue of *The Mennonite* (March 1 issue). This letter is in response to Marion Keeney Preheim's article "God Has Multiplied Her Service" and Cornelia Lehn's editorial "The Kingdom Belongs to Little People."

I am writing on behalf of myself and my family, but I am convinced I am also writing for hundreds, maybe thousands of GC members who would like to express similar thoughts.

The children in our congregations have been blessed by Nellie's presence among us. Nellie's books are understood and loved by our children.

The teachers in our congregations have received from Nellie a powerful teaching tool. Nellie has convinced many of us that a "good story well told" is one of our most effective teaching tools. She has been a model for us in sharing her unique gift of storytelling and she has given us numerous excellent storybooks.

Adult members in our congregations, especially those closely related to the children in our midst, are deeply indebted to Nellie. Nellie's articles, presentations, involvement with *The Foundation Series* and her excellent publications have been a guide to all our thinking.

This letter comes with a deep feeling of gratitude for Nellie being our employee and our servant. Her vision has been a directive force in the General Conference. (God keep you as you continue to serve, Nellie.) May we catch her sincere optimism, her positive attitude and her vision for the education of the children in our congregations. *Louise Friesen, 910 Trotter Crescent, Saskatoon, SK S7L 3R1, member of COE* April 5

Correction, please

I want to draw your attention to a mistake in the March 29 issue, page 160, under the heading "Ministers." The statement is, "Reuben Siemens resigned as pastor at Emmaus Church, Wymark, Sask., after serving six years."

I have served as pastor of the Emmaus Mennonite Church since 1973 and am terminating here this summer. That is 10 years of service. Having passed the age of 65, I feel it is time to retire as leading pastor of the church. We are planning to make our home in Rosthern, Sask., and are open to continued involvement in church work.

By the way, I spell my name Ruben (see *Conference Yearbook*).

We do enjoy *The Mennonite* and gladly forgive this mistake. We are confident you will make this correction as soon as possible. *Ruben Siemens, Box 26, Wymark, SK S0N 2Y0*

April 11

Editor's note: Sorry, Ruben. We know better but we do make mistakes. Your contributions to the church over several decades mean a lot to many people.

books

Worship aids

The Celebration of the Lord's Supper (Worship Series No. 4), *by Edwin W. Epp, Henry V. Friesen, Henry Peters (Faith and Life Press, Mennonite Publishing House, 1979, 52 pages)*

Reviewed by Claude Boyer, pastor, First Mennonite Church, Box 111, Reedley, CA 93654

The authors divide the contents into three sections: (1) biblical setting for the Lord's Supper, (2) Anabaptist understandings and (3) contemporary practices.

The first section begins with a description of the establishment of the Lord's Supper out of the experience and context of the Jewish Passover meal and practice. The point is made that in both the Passover and Lord's Supper "remembrance of deliverance" is a key factor in the experience.

The emphasis in the second section is upon seeing the Lord's Supper as both symbolic and simple. Key components of the experience are fellowship and celebration, as opposed to the sacramental. The focus upon seeing the mood as one of joy and thanksgiving—even in the context of remembering the suffering, sacrifice and death of Jesus—is a good one. A discussion of the footwashing experience is included in this section.

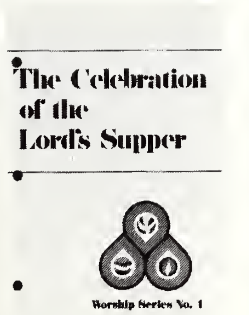
In the final section the authors point out a basic principle which is recommended for practice: "The Lord's Supper is an expression of the freedom gained in Jesus Christ." Such freedom allows room for flexibility in patterns of and places for the celebration. Good questions are posed for congregations to consider in working through tensions between using the traditional service and introducing changes. Helpful models of communion services, agape love feasts and footwashing are listed. Also included is a printed Seder service, songs and prayers, and the communion service used at the 1978 Mennonite World Conference.

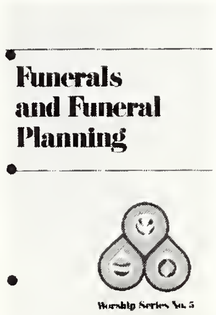
Funerals and Funeral Planning (Worship Series No. 5), *by Melvin D. Schmidt (Faith and Life Press, Mennonite Publishing House, 1980, 72 pages)*

Reviewed by Marilyn Miller, co-pastor, Arvada Mennonite Church, 5927 Miller St., Arvada, CO 80004

"Once we are born, nothing is sure except the fact that we will die. . . . Yet there are few things in life that we avoid more and are prepared for less than the fact of death."

These are the introductory words to this helpful resource to pastors and lay people in preparing for death and funerals in a creative, theologically sound way. The author stresses the importance of educating individuals and congregations regarding a Christian theology of death and promoting symbols, rituals and funeral practices that affirm this theology.





The manual is an excellent resource for exploring the creative possibilities of ministry in the church through the service and rituals connected with death. It includes good illustrations, input that some will find controversial at places, and guidance on (1) how one views death theologically with therapeutic sensitivity, (2) the role of the pastor in funeral planning, (3) various funeral styles, (4) problem funerals and (5) involvement of the local community. There is a section of possible resources to use in funeral or memorial services that includes Scripture passages, prayers and other worship resources, organ music, hymns and choir anthems. The appendix includes sample services and forms various churches are using to help members plan ahead so that family members at the time of a death do not have to make as many major decisions under emotional stress and that the funeral can be an authentic expression of the person's life and faith.

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Phone 316/283-5100.

Celebrating Christian Marriage (Worship Series No. 6), *by Gary and Lydia Harder (Faith and Life Press, Mennonite Publishing House, 1980, 48 pages)*

Reviewed by Leonard Wiebe, pastor, Faith Mennonite Church, 627 Northridge Road, Newton, KS 67114

Serving a church located in a college community provides numerous opportunities to officiate at weddings. I am always grateful for resource materials which help bring creativity and meaning to a wedding service.

This booklet is an excellent resource for creative planning. The section titled "The Meaning of the Wedding" gives helpful background to the worship experience of the wedding service. Guidelines are given to define the relationship between the minister and the couple. For me, the most helpful aspect of the booklet is the section on vows. Creative suggestions are given, along with guidelines for their use.

Many weddings in our time involve members of the family in the ceremony. This booklet offers creative ideas for the participation of parents and other family members.

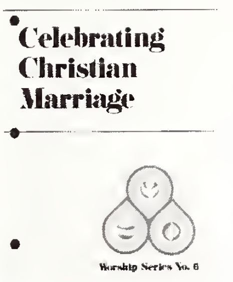
Involving Children and Youth in Congregational Worship (Worship Series No. 11), *by Cornelia Lehn (Faith and Life Press, Mennonite Publishing House, 1982, 56 pages)*

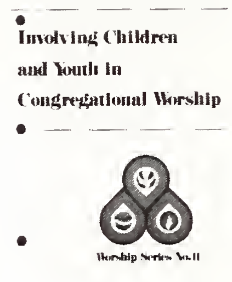
Reviewed by Doug Reichenbach, pastor, Wayland Mennonite Church, Box 143, Wayland, IA 52654

Cornelia Lehn, in her typically warm and gracious way, affirms the importance of taking everyone's needs into consideration when planning congregational worship, giving special attention to the needs of children and youth.

The first part of the booklet shares some principles such as enhancing a child's feelings of belonging, bringing creative sensuousness to the worship experience (through visual aids, meaningful movement and opportunities to touch, taste and smell), being real friends to children and youth (through concrete expressions of love and acceptance, both verbal and non-verbal) and developing expectancy among children and youth about worship.

The second part offers suggestions for getting started. The third part suggests how children and youth can be involved in the various segments of an "average" worship service, whether it be ushering, receiving the offering, singing, experiences of prayer or the preaching/teaching event. The last part of the booklet suggests making periodic special occasions of worship special times for children and youth as well.





The real question Lehn invites us to grapple with is, How seriously do we take our children and young people as full participants in the worshiping family of God? She offers a delightful potpourri of ideas for including children and young people in worship, though there seemed to be far more suggestions for including children than for involving teenagers.

Pastor needed

Grace Mennonite Church, membership of 237, is looking for a senior pastor. The church is located in a predominantly Mennonite community of approximately 5,000 people.

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May. 10/83

books

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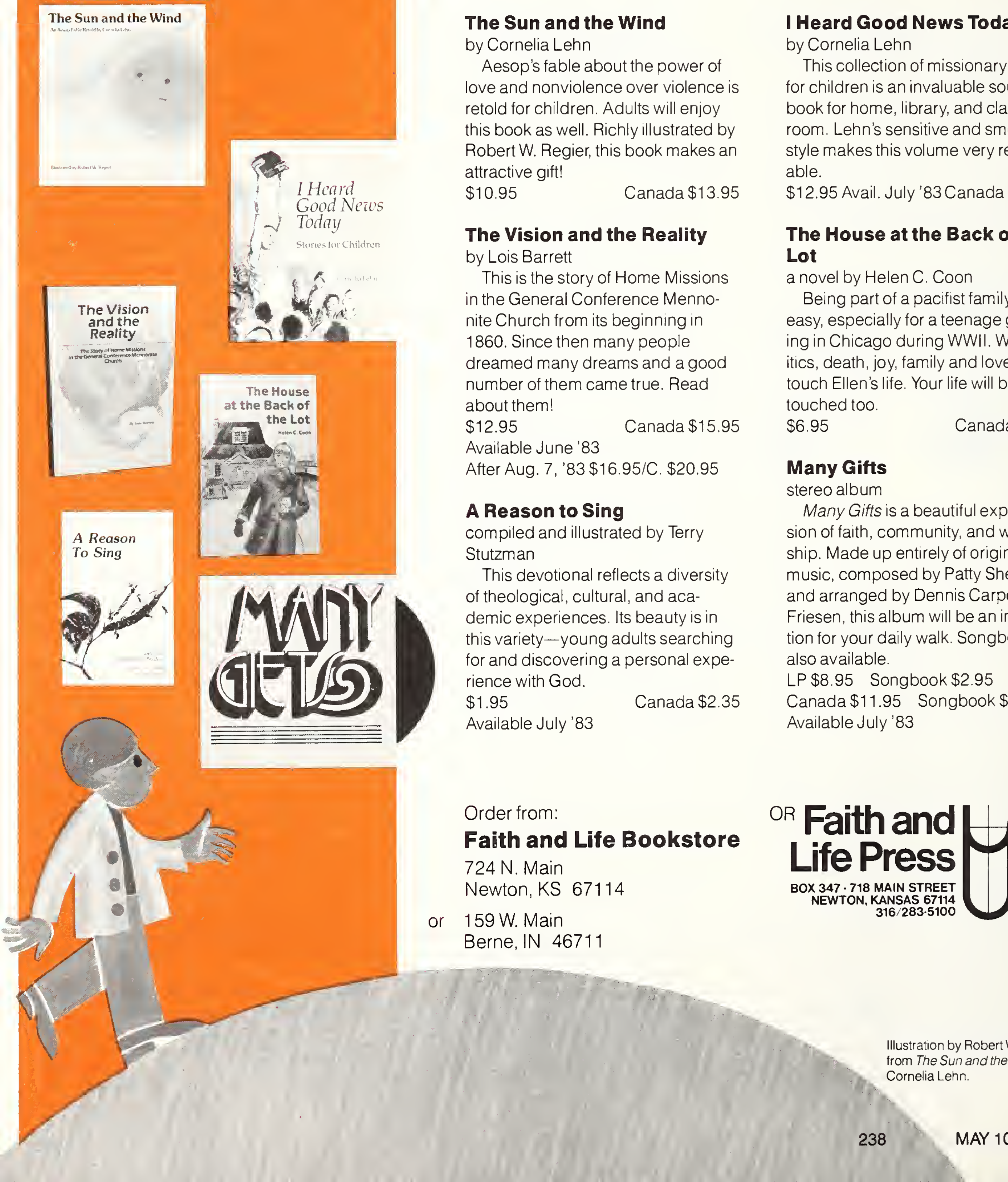
The Sun and the Wind
I Heard Good News Today
Stories for Children
The Vision and the Reality
The Story of Home Missions in the General Conference Mennonite Church
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MANY GIFTS

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Illustration by Robert W. Regier from *The Sun and the Wind* by Cornelia Lehn.

MEDITATION

Salvation also means sacrifice

Eight-year-old Sara, who had lost her mother while still an infant, was very fond of her father. Elia, their servant, liked Sara so much that he could hardly stand her absence.

Sara's father always looked to her return from school with great expectancy. One day, when Sara was late in coming, her father called out to Elia to see if Sara had come home. After looking around, Elia informed her father that Sara was coming home with Washia in her arms. Washia was her lamb.

Behind Sara were her friends, Ahishia and others. They wanted to take Sara with them. Her father permitted them to go. Sara threw down her schoolbag and went to play outside.

In the meantime her father called for Elia. "Today is our Passover," he said, "I hope you remember about the angel of destruction. You have to do one thing before Sara comes back home in the evening. You have to sprinkle the blood of Washia on the doorpost of the house as well as on the door. Don't forget, otherwise we'll lose our Sara. Take care so that Sara knows not a bit of it or she will be grieved."

Father looked more worried than usual. Sara was back home and at her studies. She had come home earlier, while others were still absorbed in play. All of a sudden she heard the plaintive voice of Washia. She set aside her studies and called for Elia. Elia came and advised her to study attentively, explaining that Washia was only hungry. But Sara could not study. She wept.

Then Elia called for her father. As usual, Sara asked her father to tell her a story. The title of the story was "Passover." With her eyes open wide, Sara listened to her father.

He said, "Passover means the first born male of humans and animals must die." Sara suddenly cried aloud and said, "Elia has told a lie to me and has sacrificed Washia." Her father comforted Sara, saying, "Without sacrifice we would have lost you." In a state of bewilderment he hugged Sara to his bosom and prayed to God, with tears streaming down his face for the long life of his daughter. After that, Sara went to bed.

In the midst of her sleep she woke and screamed, "Father, has the blood been sprinkled?" Her father came running to her and said, "Sara, what is the matter with you? Are you afraid? Come and see for yourself that the blood is already applied."

He took Sara to the door and found that the blood was not there. It was due to the negligence of Elia. The angel of destruction was supposed to come and could be almost at the door. Sara and father knocked at Elia's door. Elia came out with the vessel of blood. Father took him to task severely. Elia apologized, "Please forgive me. I had intended to apply the blood but I fell asleep." Then quickly he sprinkled the blood to every door. Just then they heard a wailing sound from their neighbors' house.

But Sara was saved. Her father and Elia thanked God for saving Sara's life.

After that, Sara and her father went to bed again. Dawn was yet to come. How could they sleep? The atmosphere was filled with the wailing and gnashing of the peoples. Sara was just a young child. She finally fell asleep from the fatigue of the day. Her father peeped into her room through the door and saw her asleep. There was a sign of joy and divine tranquillity on her face.

Jyoti Rana

CONTENTS

There is nothing more precious than life given by God. He creates all life. We human creatures have the privilege of repeatedly choosing new and fuller lives from God. In this issue we focus on the first birth of life from God and also on the "second birth" into life with Christ.

Is there anything we need more in our families and familial life than an understanding and appreciation for the life God wants to give us in ever increasing fulness?

This issue also contains Bethlehem '83 reports to build our conference family life.

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EDITORIAL

God brings life into being

A special section of the March 30 *Winnipeg Free Press* was sponsored by the League for Life of Manitoba. They had gathered 37,000 signatures to protest the opening of an abortion clinic in Winnipeg. The title of the section was "We Choose Life." Introducing the feature were these two sentences: "The signatories listed on the following pages believe that each human life deserves the utmost respect from the time of conception until natural death. We are convinced that human problems must be solved by loving and helping, not by killing" (p. 37).

Mennonite names were common among the 37,000. I counted almost 200 Wiebes. But Bernie Wiebe's signature was not there. That page stared me in the face for a long time. Why did I not sign along with many of my friends and relatives?

Abortion has been front and center in Winnipeg's media this past winter and spring largely due to this clinic, which finally did get a city license to operate.

The issue of abortion will not go away unless we show people a better way. That better way is not shown in this special section of the *Free Press*. Many people say it is to carry all pregnancies to full term, give birth, then give up for adoption if the mother cannot handle the child. To me this answer has seemed like too little too late. It offers little help in making men (there is a *father* too for each child) share in this responsibility for life jointly conceived. The actual decision to abort is most often the consequence of a series of bad choices.

One challenge for all of us is to see all life as a gift from God. Helen Friesen says it humbly and beautifully in her article. *God* gives life even when conceived in incest or rape. And as Calvin Redekop says in our Bible study, God gives life and the total creation to us for meaning. All of creation is a wholeness given by God. We human beings can choose that total wholeness or choose only those parts of life convenient to us.

Abortion in our time has become a metaphor for democracy (my rights), quasi-autonomy (I choose for my body), expediency, freedom and an end to sexist oppression (abortion-on-demand).

Society adds its own metaphors of abortion. Bullets, bombs, gas, guillotine, rope, electric current or exile/asylum/incarceration abort whatever seems uncomfortable or undesirable to those in power.

Only small minorities have ever advocated "utmost respect from . . . conception until natural death" for all life. I'm not convinced that League for Life of Manitoba means what it says. I hope I'm wrong.

Mennonites have a 460-year history of choosing life—even instead of capital punishment or self-defense when under attack (though we have not been unanimous on this and our witness is checkered). Our faith tradition believes that God is the Creator of all life and human life in Christ is God's and our highest joy (James 1:17-18). We confess that the sixth commandment (Exodus 20:13) needs no commentary; life is God's gift regardless of handicap, age, color, disease, political orientation, social behavior or religious affiliation.

When sperm joins ovum, life begins. Yes, there are miscarriages and natural plus accidental terminations of life beyond our control. And there will always be crisis judgments where we will have to choose between two lives.

Can we Mennonites continue a story of compassion and love after the unconditional, inconvenient and self-giving person—human and divine—Jesus Christ? His example makes us care for all life. It is a sacred gift from God. We cannot separate life into categories convenient to anyone's advantage.

We must seek to not exploit women or anyone else. And we must hold life holy so that deliberate abortion diminishes as an acceptable choice.

For starters, God gives and creates life in community (it takes at least two). No way is it from God that abortion is the choice of one. That is unfair and contrary to God's gift for being.

I'm not sure I did right by not signing the *Free Press* statement. It is a step. But I am sure that to protest abortion is one small part of a big issue. God brings all life into being. *Bernie Wiebe*

THE MENNONITE

OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST

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How do you spell ‘relief’?

J. Alan Youngren

The Browns and the Smiths received the same letter today. It sent one family into despair and the other into praise. Why?

Each family sponsors a child in a program of a large, evangelical relief and development organization. Each had been contributing regularly toward the support of a particular child in the Third World. Now, says the letter, the project is finished. Contributions from these two families and thousands of others like them have been applied within the communities of the two children. Conditions have improved significantly, and the children's families have become economically self-sufficient.

The Browns rejoice at the dinner table this evening. They look forward to channeling their support into the life of another hurting child.

But Mrs. Smith seethes. "This is the worst thing that's happened to me since Mother died." Then with some bitterness she says, "There are better places to put our money."

Why is there a difference? And where are the good old days of sponsoring children when "your kid was your kid" for good? In those days, a few U.S. families became so close to their sponsored children that they ended up sending them through college.

Although the organizations practicing relief and development prefer the attitude of the Browns, they would concede that even the Browns may not be aware of the vast changes in thought about the wise handling of "relief" today.

Let us take a look at the world of relief (and now development) generally, and the revolution it has undergone.

Skyrocketing interest in relief. Although donors may not be well informed about the latest thinking on relief, they have been involved in one aspect of change: growth. The number of donors has increased dramatically over the past decade; they are also giving more. Where traditional foreign mission organizations often face flattened revenue curves, relief and development people have steeply rising incomes, aided by widespread secular news reports of desperate conditions.

Traditional organizations have always put part of their effort into giving "a cup of cold water in Jesus' name." It was not until World War II, however, that the first significantly large organization devoted itself primarily to such work: the War Relief Commission of the National Association of Evangelicals (today called the World Relief Corporation). Its purpose was to aid World War II refugees.

Two organizations developed out of the Korean War, becoming the first truly parachurch groups in the relief field. The first was World Vision, begun in 1950 by Bob Pierce, and now the largest evangelical relief and development agency; two-thirds of its approximately $130 million income comes from the United States. The second, Compassion, was begun two years later.

Direct and immediate aid to children victimized by that war was Pierce's primary burden. He had the donors' heart and knew how to reach them effectively. He urged "sponsorship" or support of individual children in a one-on-one relationship—an approach that led to a high level of emotional involvement. This approach has remained essentially unaltered by the passing years. Confronting the donor with the plight of a lone child is still the main method fund raisers use for all parachurch relief activity in Canada and the United States, whether or not the appeal is to sponsor a child directly.

Disaster relief is another sphere of activity. World Concern was founded by Crista ministry of Seattle to aid such victims.

But regardless of roots or special ministries, organizations practicing relief and development have become part of a unified community. The Association of Evangelical Relief and Development Organizations (AERDO) and its philosophical sibling, the Consortium of Evangelical Relief and Development Organizations (CERDO), have fostered this. They have urged a pollination that has speeded up a revolution in thinking. AERDO provides information and coordination among all relief and development member agencies. CERDO establishes program and project standards and the development of sources to provide money for projects.

Functionally, they describe their work today as "relief, rehabilitation and development." How child sponsorship and refugee work fits into this remains a matter of individual discretion, but this is the language of their calling that binds the community together and reveals the outlook that has led to revolution.

Why relief specialists changed their minds. In the short time since

The development credo says that relief, rehabilitation and development are a progression.

1970, relief organizations have established a new science, recorded a history, and presented a literature. The science is called development. The work that was centered in relief in 1970 is now dedicated to development.

What does this mean? Development is the science of encouraging economic and social progress that is self-sustaining. The credo of development carefully defines its three key terms: *Relief* brings to an end the suffering and other effects of a disaster or crisis. *Rehabilitation* returns the community to the stable circumstances prevailing before the crisis (a term used both for the entire field and for the final stages of activity). *Development* (a term used not only for the science but also for the final stage in the process) enables the community to better itself and attain a new self-sufficiency.

The development credo says that relief, rehabilitation and development are a progression. Workers should always move from one to the next. This is because relief, if prolonged, makes the recipient dependent on the practitioner. A sustained relief effort leads easily to the loss of a good reputation in the community of development specialists.

But what about the donor? He or she probably knows little of such thinking, but that has not undercut his or her morale. In terms of supporting the work, today's relief and development donor is increasingly enthusiastic. The number of donors is continually growing. So too are the organizations doing this work, as the chart shows.

Those who perceived in all this a new evangelical social conscience have probably not gotten it quite right because of the implication that money is now being diverted away from traditional mission work. We understand the growth more correctly as the result of heavy secular news coverage of the plight of large groups of people, first in Southeast Asia and now in Africa. Of the 15 or 20 million refugees in the world today, half are children, half are in Africa. The plea for support is always much more effective when the organization wants to help in a situation already documented by news reports.

Donors: duped or self-deceived? The donors' situation is this: while they are functioning well in their role, they simply are not getting what they are giving for. Because development (cultivating the ability of victims to become self-sufficient) is better for the recipients than merely continuing relief, what the donors get for their dollar is actually better than what they think they are getting. But should they not be told how things have changed?

Although as a group they are certainly not guilty of conspiring to hide the true state of affairs, the practitioners apparently believe the answer to this question is no. Or at least, not immediately. They see the donors as people who like the paternalistic and one-to-one elements of relief and relief-oriented child support. They are unlikely to be as enthusiastic about development-oriented work as about relief, thus reflecting the old mentality.

From there the practitioners reason that if the donors know what the workers know, they would not give so handsomely. It is as simple as that—and I believe they are right in their analysis of the donors' reaction.

But we need to go a step further. It is not so much that the donors lack information as that they are unwilling to hear. They clearly prefer the old ways; they are emotionally attached to it. Even the Browns looked for a new child to sponsor.

To deal with this state of affairs, many groups have tried to reorient the donors to a wiser development mentality. These groups span the entire relief and development community, not just among evangelicals, because the problem is community wide. Through the Biden-Pell Amendment, Congress in 1981 set aside $500,000 in the United States Foreign Aid Bill so that USAID (U.S. Agency for International Development) could finance "development education" through voluntary relief and development agencies.

Three years ago World Vision announced a new program called Life Sharing Partners. Much more a vehicle for communicating development thinking than a change in procedure, this program asked donors to take part in "adopting an entire community," which is something being increasingly done as the dictates of development science take hold. But donors did not take to Life Sharing Partners, so it was changed.

In its literature, Food for the Hungry refers with growing frequency to "every-child sponsorship." But all the agencies continue to furnish donors with the names of individual children

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SOUTH AFRICA

TOTAL REVENUE SUMMARY in millions of dollars

Organization	1978	1979	1980
World Relief	1.5	4.2	13.7
Food for the Hungry	2.9	3.9	6.7
World Vision[1]	39.3	46.7	80.0
World Concern[2]	1.8	2.6	3.9
MAP International[3]	9.6	13.8	27.9
Compassion[2]		(est) 7.5	10.9

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[1] USA only
[2] Fiscal year ends June 30
[3] Predominantly medical goods

and provide two-way communication between each sponsor and child. This is the heart of the traditional experience donors continue to crave.

Especially in churches, World Vision uses the half-hour film *A Way of Caring*. While it makes clear the problems of prolonged relief and the benefits of development, that is certainly not the film's dominant emphasis.

The agency undergoing the most dramatic change—largely related to the development revolution—is MAP International (formerly Medical Assistance Programs). In the past it focused on providing large quantities of medicines and medical supplies, mostly donated, to developing areas of the world. But then the revolution in the science of development forced MAP into radical change. New (1979) president Larry Dixon's commitment to change, however, includes a commitment to candor, facing the fact that, so far, relief sells and development doesn't. Over the next few years MAP will become more an international health organization, assisting work already in place. It will be less and less an off-loader of dependency-producing goods.

Dixon further intends that in an even shorter time, MAP's fund raising will sink or swim on the donor's growing acceptance of development work as a better use of money.

The hick at the county fair. Many of those observing the relation between donors and relief-and-development agencies find a second area of concern in the "naked children" syndrome. Though relief and development is an area of ministry known for extensive cooperation and little sense of competition among agencies, the fund raisers nevertheless seem locked in combat to find the most heartrending photos and film footage of malnourished and diseased children trapped in wretched circumstances.

Whether the message is for child sponsorship, refugee work or hunger relief (the three strongest current appeals), the naked child has become commonplace in magazine ads, mail appeals and television specials.

Many criticize the whole process as manipulation of the donor. Others counter that it only makes sense to rely on the appeal that works; it supports more work and makes dollars spent on fund raising more productive.

"If the pictures bother you," note agency leaders who have been to the field, "you ought to be there in person once. Then you'd know what it really is to be made uncomfortable."

Despite the force of this retort, the criticism remains. It is not the naked-child appeal itself that offends, but its numbing repetition. First, it is pressed into service for the majority of needs—whether for food, child sponsorship or a well in the child's village. Also, child sponsorship is categorized as part of development. In that case the donor can easily be left in a mentality of paternalism and prolonged relief. After all, nothing brings the problem up, so nothing calls attention to the profound changes that have taken place in the way money is used. Their attention is still riveted to that child, and they are really thinking of nothing more than direct forms of relief.

So the Browns look for a new child to sponsor.

Because of these procedures, the agencies can on the one hand exercise great care in honoring designations of funds (as they have long done) and on the other hand still feel free to use the money for not only individual relief but for a wide range of development projects of great help to the village and, indirectly, to the starving children.

But the donor will not stand indefinitely like the proverbial hick at the county fair, playing the shell and pea game, handing over money but never catching on. It is important that they should know now. It would also be better for everyone if the burden of telling them were on someone other than the practitioners.

This writer volunteers. •

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Mennonites spell it MCC

J. Alan Youngren

Regardless of whether social conscience is just now arriving for most evangelicals, it is nothing new to the Mennonites.

The Mennonite Central Committee, founded in 1920, is the granddaddy of U.S./Canadian relief and development agencies, evangelical or otherwise. But more important, MCC holds a reputation for progressive enlightenment among specialists in the field. Differences between MCC and others can often be traced to the Mennonites' greater experience. The leaders seem less taken with endless talk, and the constituency is more informed and involved.

To Edgar Stoesz, MCC associate executive secretary for overseas, the terminological gulf fixed between "relief" and "development" is not nearly so useful as it appears to be for other R & D leaders.

As Stoesz says, "MCC sent wheat to Russia in 1920, then tractors, plows and seed to the Ukraine in 1921. People today would call the wheat 'relief' and the equipment 'development.' In both cases our people were doing what they thought would help most."

Stoesz adds, "Our people came upon their involvement in these matters rather easily because in many of those early projects they were aiding friends and relatives of Mennonites who had emigrated to the United States and Canada." They learned to resettle on this same basis in the '20s when they helped friends and relatives to relocate in places like Paraguay after they left the Soviet countries following the 1917 revolution.

. . . MCC holds a reputation for progressive enlightenment among specialists in the field

In 1982, MCC will operate on a budget of $10 million in funds and another $5 million in material aid. It is currently active in 44 countries.

In no element of relief work is the Mennonite performance more noteworthy than in fund raising. Largely this is because the constituents are self-starters. While it is true that a denomination has fund-raising advantages, the degree to which the flow of funds is spontaneous is still remarkable.

The Mennonite relief sales are an excellent example. Approximately 20 of these sales occur annually across the United States and Canada, generating a total of around $2 million. The largest sale is in Hutchinson, Kan. Proceeds there were $332,000 in 1982.

The Mennonite sales are best known for their quilts, crafted by Mennonite women and sold at auction for as much as $1,000 apiece. Food, antiques and livestock are also on the long sale list.

Each sale quickly becomes an annual event, but in the beginning "they simply happen," according to MCC officials at the Akron, Pa., headquarters. Material Aid director John Hostetler says, "We're in the habit of leaving the sales alone. We just go out and pick up the check."

The sales, however, are no more important than a second fund-raising effort among MCC supporters, the Mennonite self-help stores. There are 72 in the United States and Canada, each run by a part-time, paid manager. Other store workers are volunteers. The merchandise falls into two categories: resale items, such as clothes or tools, and goods produced by workers in the countries in which MCC works (this creates a market and source of income for MCC development projects).

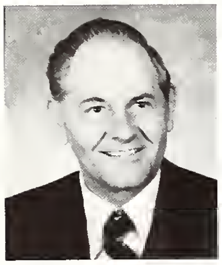
The people of the MCC-affiliated churches know the potential of such activity, and they know the money is needed around the world. As a result, they are willing to put in the time and work required to make these projects successful.

Such grass-roots motivation and effort mean that the MCC's donors escape a lot of the confrontation with that ubiquitous naked child others face so often. •

Thinking of Bethlehem '83

Time of celebration

I see Bethlehem '83 as a time of celebration. We celebrate through worship our oneness in Jesus Christ our Lord. We celebrate through sharing the riches of our Anabaptist heritage and its biblical roots. We celebrate in fellowship—as General Conference and Mennonite Church constituencies—our work together in many areas of mutual concern. We celebrate in studying together as we face the contemporary issues which challenge all of us. We celebrate the many opportunities open to us to serve a needy world. We celebrate the privilege of witnessing to a lost world concerning a living Christ. *Kenneth G. Bauman, Box 111, Berne, IN 46711, pastor of First Church*



Bauman

Epp

Growth and maturing

The events of the last 300 years or even 150 years have precipitated many interpretations as to the direction the people of two Mennonite groups have been led. Emotional upheavals on a personal, local and constituency level have prevented growth and maturing as might have been providentially desired. I hope that through the Spirit that has been given us, we can sensitively listen to one another, be keenly perceptive of where each one is coming from and with an awareness of our peoplehood under God and a humble attitude, be enabled to discern our place among humankind. *Bruno Epp, Route 5, Marshall Road, Abbotsford, BC V2S 4N5*

Somewhat apprehensive

Though somewhat apprehensive about the mechanics of how two conferences will function together, I have these hopes: that we may continue to grow spiritually as a people as we dialogue about two urgent issues—the necessity of seeking justice as we pursue peace, and greater understanding of our human sexuality. I hope that the U.S. caucus will be able to initiate some responsible oversight of U.S. General Conference issues so that the Commission on Home Ministries may become more binational, and that the joint conference will show that while organic unity is not a necessity, the unity of outward witness is (to quote John Howard Yoder). *Don Steelberg, 405 Trease Road, Wadsworth, OH 44281*

Steelberg

Tilitzky

Learn from original Bethlehem

At Bethlehem '83 I would like to see the Prince of Peace who came to the original Bethlehem two millenniums ago—not as a babe in the frame of a stable but as a living Lord framed by his people of two historic peace conferences. I am looking for this vision to be focused by the reflection of 300 years of Anabaptist experience in North America. Anticipations of changes to the frame in which the image of the Prince of Peace is focused are high: changes in shape (structure), changes in shade (expression), and like the shepherds of old, I have visions of 6,000 20th-century shepherds taking to the road proclaiming visually and orally what they have seen and heard at Bethlehem '83. *Jacob Tilitzky, president, General Conference Mennonite Church, 2201 Queen Road, Route 1, Abbotsford, BC V2S 1M3*

Time of discovery

I hope that the joint GC/MC conference will be for everyone a time of discovery or rediscovery of our common heritage and vision. I hope this will happen in the structured input sessions that are planned as well as in the times of breaking bread and recreation. That there will be a continual sharing of ideas, thoughts and views from an attitude of love and willingness to understand others. We have many areas of mutual concern and interest as well as unique opportunities and problems that we need to be aware of. Hopefully this dialogue will continue outside the forum provided by the conference to continually enrich our lives and challenge our common call to discipleship. *Norm Voth, 600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, MB R3P 0M4, student at CMBC*

Great event

The title of this conference is especially important. It suggests a gathering of all people to one place for an important reason—the gathering of two Mennonite groups.

I think it's great that this can take place. It is important that we can all get together in one meeting for the purpose of glorifying Christ. The learning and teaching experiences will hold fascinating prospects for the future. My only regret is that it has not happened sooner. *Norma Stoesz, Box 8, Headingly, MB, R0H 0J0, member of the Home Street Church (Winnipeg), a home care worker*

Stoesz

Sprunger

Unique opportunity

The special joint conference is a unique opportunity for all who attend to renew and strengthen their faith as Mennonites from two conferences worshiping together. It is a time to give thanks for stalwart forebears, revel in our historic roots, share in celebration of our commonness, address joint issues, embrace old friends and praise God for his mercies to us.

It is my hope that from this conference we will come away with greater unity as a General Conference people and a realization of the potential for a closer working relationship with the Mennonite Church. *Ben Sprunger, 4601 N. High St., Columbus, OH 43214*

God created a land home for us

Ken Peterson

Swirling like a wheel, the new earth was a ball of hot gas. Gradually the gas began to cool and liquefy. A molten mass was formed. Separating the lighter from the heavier, the elements of the earth began to form a pattern. At the core sank the heavy iron-nickel—with a solid inner core and a liquid outer core. A lighter solid mantle of rock rose around the core; and an even lighter basalt rose above the mantle to form a solid crust covered by ocean waters. Finally, rising up out of the earth above the basalt crust and floating on the crust, rising above the sea—a concentration of solid granite continental crust appeared. And God said, "Let the dry land appear: and it was so" (Genesis 1:9b).

There are many theories as to how the continents have risen out of the sea to form the dry land. It is a controversial subject among scientists. Some theorize there may have been an original single continent they call Panaea, which cracked, drifted apart and formed the various continents of Africa, North and South America, Antarctica, Australia and Eurasia. Whatever may have actually been the exact process, the providential hand of the Intelligent Designer was behind it all—forming, providing a special place for God to create and to place a unique species of life reflecting the image of God.

Humanity—the glory of God's image—cannot perpetually swim and live in the oceans like the fish of the sea, nor can we fly in the sky and make our home in the atmosphere above. We need *land*—the rising continents. And so for our good, for the good of there being a place to house humankind, God said, "Let the dry land appear. . . ."

Land is precious. My grandfather, Otto Peterson, came from Sweden to the United States in 1883. On Nov. 9, 1898, my grandfather was granted a homestead of 160 acres, 10 miles northeast of Colville, Wash. The deed says, "To have and to hold the said tract of land." The land was valuable for farming, logging in the forest, grazing the cattle and horses, raising wheat and alfalfa hay, and planting an orchard of apples and other fruit. That farm—that valuable land—was home.

What a special home are the continents—towering mountains, plenteous valleys and plains, winding rivers and beautiful lakes. Land filled with abundance of minerals, forests and water. All the resources necessary to provide for the continuance of life.

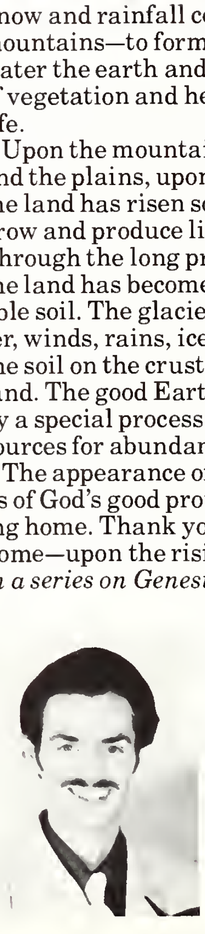
Think of the towering mountains. Our farmhouse was on top of a hill. To our north rose Old Dominion Mountain. To the southeast rose Old Baldy. We moved to town when I was about 10, and the Colville Valley was surrounded by high mountains. I used to climb Colville Mountain, the foot of which was the northern wall of the town. Here in California I've been introduced to the High Sierras, Mt. Badden Powel, Mt. Baldy and Cucamonga Peak. The mountains give me a sense of security, of challenge and of quiet majesty.

Mountains are created by movements of the earth's crust. Different parts of the earth's crust react to these movements in different ways, forming four basic types of mountains: (1) folded mountains, (2) faultblock mountains, (3) dome mountains and (4) volcanic mountains.

Towering mountains are of great value to the overall value of the continents. In their glaciers they hold water—to water the crops, fields and forests. Forests flourish in the mountains, providing timber for our homes. Snow and rainfall come from the mountains—to form rivers and lakes, to water the earth and give us abundance of vegetation and hence abundance of life.

Upon the mountains and the valleys and the plains, upon the granite crust of the land has risen soil for vegetation to grow and produce life in abundance. Through the long processes of erosion the land has become covered with valuable soil. The glaciers, the running water, winds, rains, ice and snow deposit the soil on the crust of the continents of land. The good Earth has been prepared by a special process to produce all the resources for abundance of life.

The appearance of dry land reminds us of God's good provision of a continuing home. Thank you, God, for this home—upon the rising continents. *Fifth in a series on Genesis*



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Spiritual growth is risk and adventure

Frank R. Keller

I attended a workshop on "Training in Spiritual Direction" at the Manna House of Prayer in Concordia, Kan., Feb. 1-12. This retreat center, a former community hospital, is now operated by the Sisters of St. Joseph. Those two weeks offered me experiences that may prove to be some of the most significant experiences of my life.

Interest in spiritual direction began when I attended a workshop for church executives in June 1982. Three of the people said they had their own spiritual directors. One of them told me that meeting regularly with that person was significant for him personally and helpful in his ministry.

When I returned home I prayed about this and gave much thought to the idea of seeking a spiritual director. I spoke to a number of people, and they suggested that I seek a person who has training in that area. I was given the name of Sister Janet Rowly, a nun in the order of the Adorers of the Blood of Christ in Wichita, Kan.

After an initial meeting we agreed to meet weekly for one month and thereafter monthly. It was an enriching experience for me and has helped me evaluate my priorities personally and in my ministry.

Sister Janet suggested that at some time I consider going on a spiritual retreat. When the opportunity came I was able to find many reasons why I could not attend such a workshop. In the "Memo of Understanding" for my position as conference minister of the Western District Conference there are numerous things that are not carried out or completed as one would desire. Five days before the Manna House workshop, I did make the decision to attend.

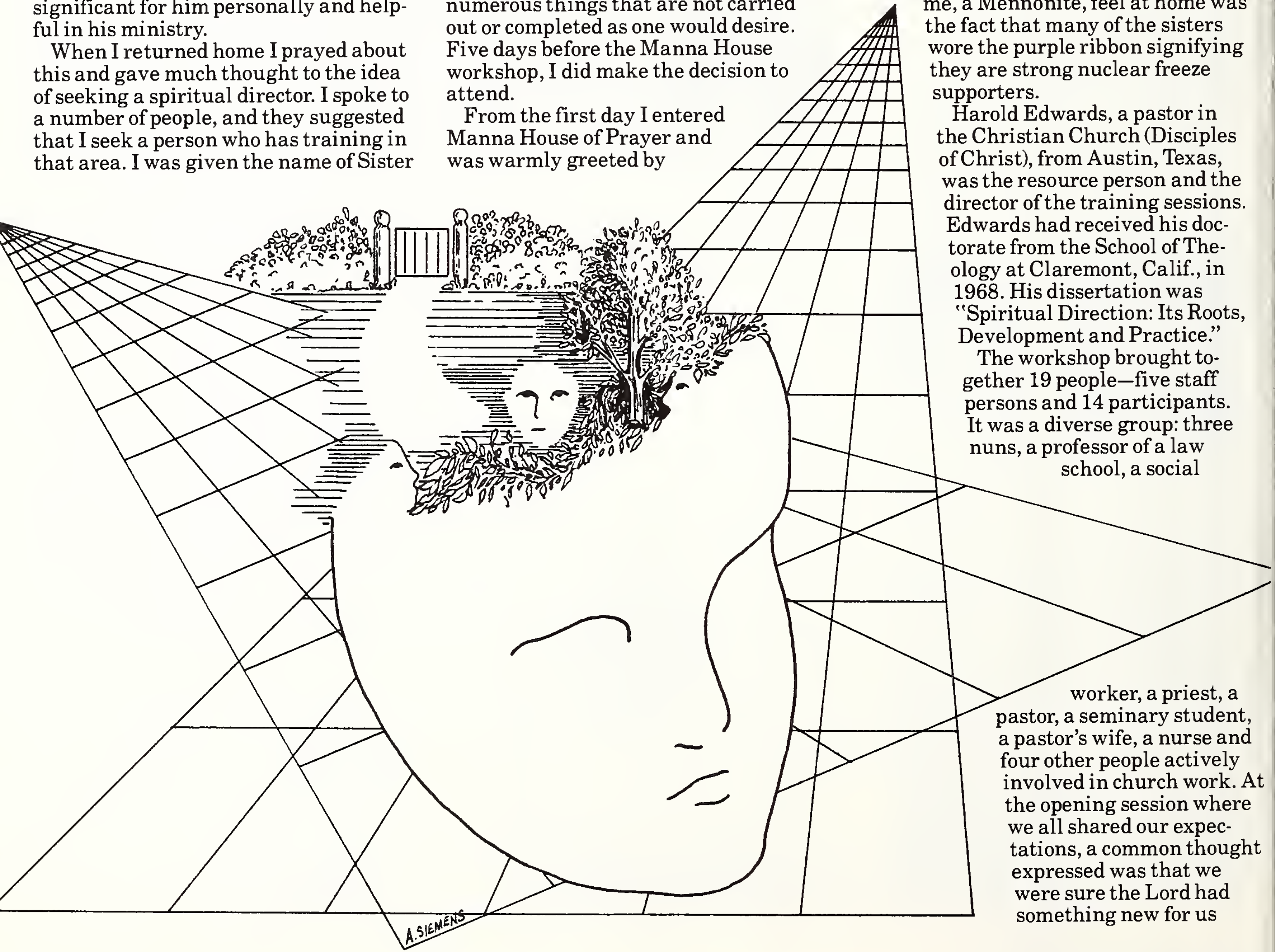
From the first day I entered Manna House of Prayer and was warmly greeted by Sister Carmella until two weeks later when I left, I felt it was indeed an ideal place for this event. As I entered Manna House I was also drawn to the words on the entry wall: "To those who prove victorious I will give the hidden manna and a white stone, a stone with a new name written on it known only to the one who receives it" (Revelation 2:17).

The 10 nuns and three novices who operate Manna House offered a setting and an atmosphere where one could feel and experience the Holy Spirit.

I was aware of the presence of the Spirit's gifts that Paul wrote about in his New Testament letters: compassion, joy, peace and love. One thing that made me, a Mennonite, feel at home was the fact that many of the sisters wore the purple ribbon signifying they are strong nuclear freeze supporters.

Harold Edwards, a pastor in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), from Austin, Texas, was the resource person and the director of the training sessions. Edwards had received his doctorate from the School of Theology at Claremont, Calif., in 1968. His dissertation was "Spiritual Direction: Its Roots, Development and Practice."

The workshop brought together 19 people—five staff persons and 14 participants. It was a diverse group: three nuns, a professor of a law school, a social worker, a priest, a pastor, a seminary student, a pastor's wife, a nurse and four other people actively involved in church work. At the opening session where we all shared our expectations, a common thought expressed was that we were sure the Lord had something new for us



to experience, to feel and to know.

Spiritual direction is an educative process which enables people to grow in their love of and oneness with self, others and God. By increasing self-knowledge through the understanding of dreams, the resolving of inner conflicts and the expanding of consciousness, people can become more creative, responsible and loving.

The four workshop team leaders, skilled and experienced, served as channels of the Lord and emphasized that the ultimate guide in the process is the Holy Spirit.

Gerald Kelly gives a good definition of spiritual direction as "instruction and encouragement of individuals on the way of perfection." Usually "way of perfection" is misunderstood, assumed to mean a so-called sinless state. Kelly says it is the growing toward a state of consciousness and way of living in and through which love is freely received and given. Thus the "way of" also means "way toward" a life permeated with and directed by love (agape).

Is spiritual direction a new phenomenon for our era? No, Edwards pointed out that it is an educative process with an Old Testament origin. Examples are the schools of the prophets, Eli and Samuel, Elijah and Elisha, Jesus and the disciples, Paul and Timothy, Titus and others.

The Early Church fathers practiced spiritual direction: Clement of Alexandria (A.D. 192), Tertullian (A.D. 199) and Origen (A.D. 230). It reached a higher point of refinement through St. Teresa of Avila and St. John of the Cross in the 16th and 17th centuries, respectively.

The practice of spiritual direction has a long history in the Roman Catholic Church and is now attracting more Protestants. It is not counseling or therapy nor problem centered. Every Christian can benefit from spiritual direction and, through knowledge and awareness, grow toward self-direction and less in need of a human director.

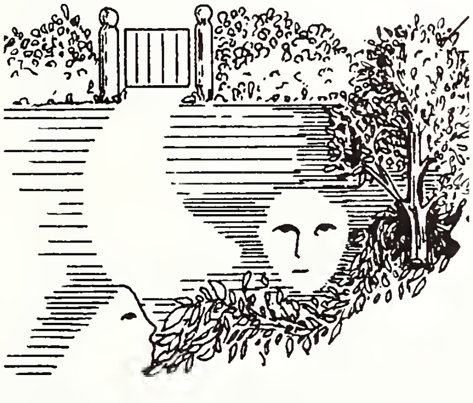
Edwards placed emphasis on "Psychosynthesis: A Way to Inner Freedom." The Italian Roberto Assagioli wrote on this subject in a doctoral dissertation in 1910. Psychosynthesis is a method of constructively coming to grips with the psyche's complex problems. It leads to an art of healing, education and living.

An important element in psychosynthesis is the spiritual. One's true self is known through the integration of the physical, psychological and the spiritual. This integration brings what C. G. Jung termed "individuation," Maslow "self-actualization," and more recent psychologists "the wholeness to life that God intends for people."

Factors that inhibit us from living this complete, whole life may be subpersonalities within each one of us. It is as if at times we are different people wearing different masks. Some subpersonalities will be negative and others positive. It is important for us to identify each, to recognize them, to determine what gift each has to offer us and to integrate them into our psyche.

Edwards, from his years of experience as a pastor, counselor and spiritual director, has found that fears significantly affect and often are detrimental to all meaningful interpersonal relationships. Fear of exposure, rejection, intimacy and change have an adverse effect on people. All fear limits and prohibits our being free, loving and responsible people.

We also recognize that all of us live with some fears. To have no fears would be potentially dangerous. Healthy fear creates attitudes of caution and serves to protect us from dangers.



Edwards refers to the nature of the four fears: *Fear of exposure* in its generalized form becomes a fear of the unknown. The fear of exposure causes people to be afraid of being known. There seems to be a tremendous fear of being found inadequate, crazy or shallow.

Fear of rejection is usually based on early experiences of being rejected, not being accepted. Fear of rejection is a fear of not being loved or of not receiving adequate love. People with this fear are not prone to take risks to grow or expand mentally, emotionally or spiritually.

Fear of intimacy causes people to avoid open, loving relationships. This fear causes people to avoid mutuality and tends to keep them dependent on others for approval, acceptability and creativity.

Fear of change or fear of growth actually permeates all of our experience and is interrelated with the previous three. The facing of any fear will cause change both interpersonally and intrapersonally.

Edwards believes that the best way to deal with our fears and to facilitate growth is through spiritual direction. In this way we come to a level of self-knowledge where we find the love that frees us for living a whole life.

A key part of our training at Manna House by Edwards was imagery, both individually guided and group guided. We experienced and practiced it each day.

Imagery is one effective way to deal with and to recognize our subpersonalities, to deal creatively with our fears, to bring to consciousness suppressed feelings and emotions and to start us on the way of perfection. We can free ourselves from anger and resentment we may have toward other people whether they are living or dead.

Through imaging at the workshop we were guided to the level of consciousness we experience when we are dreaming. This is possible through complete relaxation and contemplation. For example, each participant could image a meadow. For me it was a beautiful meadow with a flowing stream, wild flowers and bright sunshine.

We were then asked to image a wise being. For me it was Jesus with whom I could communicate. In the two-week period many other people, both living and departed, were present in my meadow. At times it was very emotional, but it proved to be a time for healing, inner harmony and integration. A basic understanding in imaging is that the Holy Spirit is the ultimate guide.

I am thankful to God for my training in spiritual direction. Sister Janet Rowly helped me experience a new dimension of the spiritual life. At Manna House I experienced a loving, compassionate community conducive for healing and growth. The Lord gave me the hidden manna, and I have grown in love and oneness with myself, others and God. I hope many others can have the same experience.

Calgary—April 10 marked the beginning of Sunday morning worship services for the new Mennonite fellowship here known, for the time being, as Calgary IV. The new church will soon choose an official name and meets in a school building. Twelve families from First Mennonite Church, Calgary, and eight families from the city's Foothills Mennonite Church have committed themselves to the new venture. The two congregations agreed to cooperate in planting a fourth church in the city when it became clear that Calgary Mennonite Fellowship, established in the northeast section of the city in 1976, was firmly rooted and independent. Calgary IV is located in the southern part of the city. Although Sunday morning services started April 10, Sunday evening services were begun a month earlier. Committees have been set up to oversee the work of organizing worship, music, Sunday school, finances and other areas. A pastor will be called "in due time." "As the character of the congregation develops and as the members meld in purpose, it is hoped that leadership and structure will also develop," says Irene Klassen, a member of First Church. "The parent churches are losing some strong members, but on the other hand, they are rejoicing in the growth and maturity."

NEWS

Ordination issue sees intense debate at EDC

Quakertown, Pa.—With a record delegate voting strength present (242 out of a possible 244) for the 185th sessions of the Eastern District Conference at West Swamp Church in Quakertown, April 28-May 1, there was electricity in the air. And it materialized in a hurry.

David Bartow, EDC vice president, presented a preliminary 20-page report on an update of the conference's constitution as the first item of business following president Wilmer Denlinger's opening sermon. Bartow's report was intended for discussion later, but the floor mike was crowded before he had finished.

Jerry O'Connell, Richfield pastor, expressed the concern that a switch to inclusive language was an attempt to bring in unacceptable doctrines via the back door. Milton Harder, Grace Church, Lansdale, wondered why the ministerial committee seemed independent from the EDC executive and from the congregations with which it worked. Ted Regier, West Swamp pastor, urged that qualifications for deacons also include Galatians 5:13-26, while Craig Maven, Springfield Church, Quakertown, wanted more about elders included in the constitution. David Hillegas, EDC conference minister, said a problem with the resolution was its "legislative nature."

All this was Thursday evening. On Friday morning, the peace and social concerns committee, Young People's Union, Bluffton College and Germantown Corporation reports all seemed to be the prelude to the main agenda item of the day. It came with a resolution from Conewago Community Chapel in Manchester: "Be it resolved that on the basis of a normal, literal, grammatical, historical interpretation (the interpretation of our fathers) of holy, inspired, inerrant Scripture . . . the EDC acknowledges the ordination of women as disobedient to the Word of God and the EDC constitution and hereby requests all EDC churches who have ordained women in the past to recall and annul said ordinations immediately."

The first round of debate on this resolution (speakers were split about equally pro and con) resulted in a ballot vote on whether to postpone a vote on it indefinitely. The result was a tie vote—120 to 120.

This meant round two on Friday afternoon. Discussion included strong emotions, reinforced with biblical references and claims that at stake was a landmark stand for the Bible. Similar pleas were made that the issue had been re-

Is a motion to indefinitely postpone a vote debatable? (Left to right) Ray Hacker, Nancy Detweiler, Richard Rosenberger and Wilmer Denlinger try to sort it out.

A Mennonite school is being established in Calgary by the Mennonite churches there. A school will be rented from the Catholic school board on a yearly basis. It has adequate gymnasium, library and office facilities, but additional portable classrooms will be needed, plus necessary equipment. The enrollment is over 70 in kindergarten through grade nine, but it is hoped to reach 150 by the opening date in September. Fees are to be kept at a minimum, with government grants and private donations covering the major portion of the cost per pupil. The curriculum is that of the Alberta Education Program of Studies.

"Road to Bethlehem: Mennonites of Eastern Pennsylvania," a slide set containing 68 slides with script only, has just been completed. Dealing with aspects of religion, education, agriculture and artistic interests of the Mennonites during their 300-year history in Pennsylvania, the slide set is particularly useful before the Bethlehem '83 conference. It may be ordered from the Heritage Committee, Commission on Education, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. The cost is $20.

SANE and the Coalition for a New Foreign and Military Policy estimate that if a bilateral nuclear weapons freeze were adopted soon, it would save American taxpayers $84.2 billion over the next six years. And if that money were put instead into housing, railroads, solar energy and mass transit, it would create half a million new jobs for the entire six-year period.

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solved at the 1981 EDC sessions and that it was time to move on; there was much other work to do. The result was a motion to postpone action on the resolution until the 1984 sessions and urge dialogue among individuals, congregations and committees in the meantime. This passed by a vote of 138 to 89.

Round three was brief. During Saturday's closing resolutions, one called for the constitutional revisions to be handled in a manner similar to the women's ordination question (i.e. to hold regional discussions about the use of non-sexist language). Again several persons jumped to the mikes. Some appealed for consideration of the reasons for the original formation of the General Conference (rallying around common tasks rather than around a static set of doctrines), while others reminded the assembly that the questions involved were too important to pass over quickly. The resolution passed.

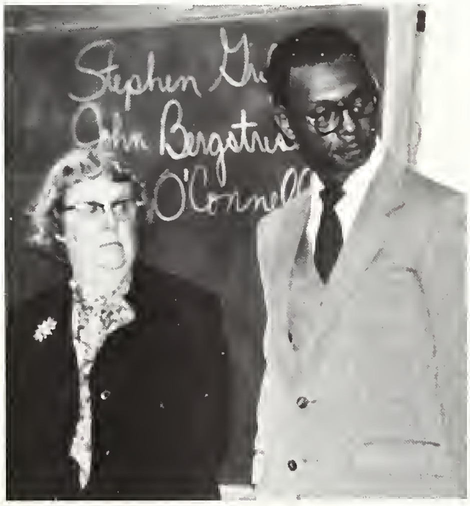
Parallel to the intensity present at EDC about these issues ran keen interest in and appreciation for Myron Augsburger's addresses on the theme "300 Years into the Future." In his first talk, titled "Celebration of History," Augsburger declared Mennonite history as neither "modernist nor fundamentalist . . . ours is a kingdom theology that says 'yes' whenever another theology promotes Christ-centered discipleship in any part of the world and says 'no' to any theology which denies the incarnational, relational implications of Christ in all of life."

Commenting briefly on the women's ordination debate, Augsburger confessed that the Washington Mennonite Fellowship, where he now pastors, has a woman elder, and he said he felt Paul's emphasis in 1 Timothy 2 was to begin encouraging women to "modestly" learn how to work along in the church. Augsburger said, in looking at the Mennonite past, that the Anabaptists were the true 16th-century evangelicals. But we have at times become defensive about our uniqueness and need to open ourselves anew to how the Holy Spirit wants to motivate us today, he said.

Speaking on "Convictions of the Present," Augsburger called on the EDC to hold up Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord at the heart of all ministry. Such a Christology makes all believers more than spectators; our baptism means a call and commitment to serve.

In a concluding address on "The Creativity for the Future," EDC delegates were urged to lose their "inferiority complex." The Mennonite church's peace teaching and other unique tenets are not hindrances to growth. In fact, he said, the Mennonite church has seen phenomenal growth (especially in Africa), both in numbers and in per capita commitment by individuals to service as missionaries, volunteers and work in other forms of ministry. Mennonites must become more involved personally in social justice causes, they must be open to fresh inbreakings of the Holy Spirit and they should be prepared to "meet unbelievers on their own grounds."

Frances Taltavull (left) and Carlton Minnis report for Crossroads Community Center.



Bob Laubach reports for Camp Men-O-Lan through a role play.

While the intensity of appreciation by delegates for Augsburger's messages was clearly evident, his challenges were largely ignored in the discussion about the difficult issues of inclusive language and women's ordination. Perhaps this was best explained by Jerry O'Connell's comment, "We clearly need more time to talk among ourselves and with others. I would have liked to ask Dr. Augsburger how he squares a woman elder with the teaching of the Bible. There wasn't time and I'm still thinking about that."

Other resolutions turned down the young people's request for a half-time youth worker, denied a $6,000 item for the Philadelphia Mennonite Council, approved $3,500 toward a worker at Indian Creek Homes for the developmentally disabled and reaffirmed confidence and support for Crossroads Community Center in Philadelphia after a difficult year of staff and other problems.

The 1982 budget receipts had been $102,940. The 1983 budget calls for $132,425. Continuing on the EDC executive are Denlinger and Bartow, Nancy Detweiler, secretary, and Julian Hagin, treasurer. *Bernie Wiebe*

The Recycling Project, now under the auspices of Mennonite Disaster Service, is a recycling program of waste materials such as glass, metal cans and paper which involves all the Mennonite churches in the Niagara Peninsula of Ontario. In its four years of operation over 500 tons of paper and glass have been recycled, generating about $14,000 for MCC.

"Paix Parmi les Hommes" (Peace Among Men) was the theme of the first Quebec Peace Conference held Feb. 17-19 at l'Institut Biblique Laval, Ste-Rose, P.Q. The Bible institute and the Montreal House of Friendship co-sponsored the event. Between 50-80 people attended each of the four sessions. On display at a booktable was *Le Chemin de la Paix (The Way of Peace)*, published in English by Faith and Life Press, Newton, Kan., and *L'Evangile de la Paix (The Gospel of Peace)* by J. C. Wenger, published by the Mennonites of France.

Seven faculty members of the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Ind., were honored March 28 for their publication of books during the 1982-83 school year. The Institute of Mennonite Studies, a research agency of AMBS, hosted the celebration tea. The authors honored were David Augsburger, Ross T. Bender, Robert L. Ramseyer, Bertha Fast Harder, J. C. Wenger, Willard M. Swartley and Leland D. Harder.

Small congregations have unique set of needs, opportunities

Lehigh, Kan.—"Jesus emphasized the value of small things," said David Habegger, secretary for congregational life of the General Conference's Commission on Home Ministries, at the Mennonite and Brethren Small Church Conference. He planned the event, which was held at the Lehigh Mennonite Church, May 6-7, with 53 participating.

Pastor Waldo Kaufman arranged for the use of the church, lodging in homes, coffee breaks and a noon meal on Saturday.

Habegger led the first session Friday night on "Understanding the Small Church." He defined a small church as having 35 to 40 people for the Sunday service. He encouraged participants to value the small church. "The real strength lies in the feeling, 'This is our church,' " he said, and emphasized the sense of caring present in many small groups.

Habegger also highlighted things a large church envies about a small church, such as its friendliness, stability, upholding of traditions and ability to influence town policy.

Robert Coon, pastor at Deer Creek (Okla.) Mennonite Church, led a session on "The Mission of the Small Church." He passed out four different colored sheets for planning a step-by-step goal-setting strategy. The four sheets outlined (1) defining the group's new role, (2) identifying the church's strengths, (3) identifying needs and a possible new ministry goal and (4) selecting, implementing and following through on the new ministry goal. Conferees then met in small groups to fill out the sheets with their own churches in mind.

The third session, "Christian Education in the Small Church," was led by John Gaeddert, the General Conference's executive secretary for the Commission on Education. He emphasized the value of intergenerational classes for small churches since they often have a limited number of children, and he used an example of an intergenerational class from *Parables of Jesus*.

Art Flaming, conference minister of the Mennonite Brethren Church's southern district, focused on "Leadership in the Small Church" in a fourth session. He pointed out that little is said about leadership in books about the small church. He asked conferees to imagine themselves in a rural area with no church around but with four Christian families nearby. He then suggested they think through how they would start a church and decide on what kind of leadership they would have.

In the discussion that followed, one participant said that people from small churches are rarely on the slate of nominees for their district or the General Conference.

The final session of the conference offered interest groups on youth, music, administration and finances, evangelism, models for community ministry, bivocational pastoral leadership and cooperative programs with other churches.

During the course of the conference a number of participants mentioned that one of the chief benefits of the gathering was the encouragement they gained through sharing their experiences with people from other small churches. *Marion Keeney Preheim*

Pastor needed

A pastor is needed to serve in the Emmaus Mennonite Church of Wymark, Sask. Duties to commence Sept. 1, 1983.

Please contact:
Fred Heese
Box 25
Wymark, SK S0N 2Y0.

Position open

Director of public information

Responsible for college news service and publications. Minimum education: B.S. in journalism or communications. Experience in this or comparable work. Knowledge of publication design and photography required.

Send cover letter and resume to:
Paul M. King
Director of Development
Bluffton College
Bluffton, OH 45817.

Director of information and recruitment for Rosthern Junior College

Needs to be a person convinced of church school education and committed to the Anabaptist faith.

The position involves ongoing communications with churches, parents and prospective students. Candidate should enjoy meeting people and be free to travel.

Boys' dean

Must have a good understanding of students and the ability to relate to them freely and effectively.

Duty includes supervision, but goes beyond that to counseling and community building. Additional extracurricular skills would be helpful.

Housing provided at reduced rate. Salary at four-fifths of teacher's rate.

For further information or application contact:
David Winter
Rosthern Junior College
Rosthern, SK S0K 3R0
Phone 306/232-4222.

THE MENNONITE

WM EDITION

WM

WINDOW TO MISSION

JUNE — JULY 1983

You Are Invited...

Come to celebrate the joint meeting of General Conference Women in Mission and The Women's Missionary and Service Commission (Mennonite Church) at Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, Wednesday, August 3, from 5:45 to 6:45 p.m. On this historic occasion we commemorate 300 years of Mennonite history on this continent. Here we will enjoy fellowship, sing and worship together, and affirm our unity in "Christ our Cornerstone." Our theme is taken from 1 Peter 2:5: "like living stones be yourselves built into a spiritual house, . . . a holy priesthood." (RSV) Christ is a living stone, the cornerstone of the temple of God. Because of our relationship with Jesus, we too can be "living stones" in this temple, building a unique community of faithful disciples.

Earlier on Wednesday the two women's groups will assemble separately. Women in Mission will meet from 2:00 to 3:15, and our sister organization, WMSC, from 11:00 to 12:15. We will gather for inspiration through music from the Eastern District women's choir, worship, meeting some of our missionary women, and an introduction to the newly released book, *I Heard Good News Today*, commissioned by WM. An offering will be received for our retired missionaries. Delegates will vote for new officers and the proposed constitutional changes.

A time of fellowship, hosted by women of the Eastern District, will give us opportunity to get to know one another better.

At each of these Wednesday gatherings and throughout the week, we would seek to let God's presence guide and lead us into increasing usefulness. Let us strengthen bonds of Christian love. Then we can depart with greater sensitivity, dedicated to bring healing to our hurting world.

Lora Oyer,
General Conference WM President

COVER

Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassion, kindness, lowliness, meekness, and patience. . . Colossians 3:12 (RSV).

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Peace Within the Body

Mary Lehman Yoder

WHEN WE CONSIDER peacemaking we usually think in terms of enemies, persons outside of the body of Christ who are hated or alienated for one reason or another. Indeed, making peace with our enemies, as God has done with us in Christ, is central to our calling as Christians.

However, as the Apostle Paul sees it, peacemaking *within* the body of Christ is also important. In Colossians 3 Paul writes about the new life to which God's chosen people are called. He speaks of the old evil nature which must be put aside, as well as old enmities which are now no more — between Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, slave and freeman.

In verse 12 Paul begins to describe in specific terms those qualities which characterize this new body: kindness, compassion, humility, gentleness, and patience. Yet even within this renewed fellowship Paul assumes there will be conflicts and need for peacemaking.

Verse 13 speaks of situations where wrongdoing has been perceived, where repentance and forgiveness are necessary. "Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you" (NIV).

Hurts and misunderstanding will arise, Paul says, and when they do, deal openly and straightforwardly, seeking reconciliation.

Often we mistakenly believe that we will "keep peace" by bearing our hurts alone. "I'll just forgive him," we say with a sort of noble suffering attitude. Rather than promoting real peace, we simply keep the hurts out of sight. We cover the broken arm with a bandage, rather than seeking out the proper treatment of setting and casting.

We must work together with our brother or sister to make the wrong right, to come to repentance and forgiveness. The example for this action is found in the way the Lord has forgiven us. Rather than God in heaven silently forgiving our wrongs, he has come to us in Christ Jesus, seeking us out, calling us to repentance and reconciliation.

In verse 15 Paul uses a subtle but rich metaphor in regard to peacemaking. The situation here does not necessarily seem to be wrongdoing, but rather conflict or tension arising out of differences of opinion.

When this occurs, "let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace" (NIV). The verb *rule* has the sense of judging or perhaps better, refereeing at an athletic event; the idea is to weigh, consider, and then make a fair decision. The sense of setting priorities is also present in the Greek verb.

This notion of Christ's peace ruling is no individual matter. Paul is not writing about the personal sense of peace and good feelings that I may wish to attain apart from my sister or brother. It is in our relationships with one another—"as members of one body you were called to peace"—that we experience Christ's peace ruling, judging, and setting priorities when differences and difficulties arise.

In biblical times at each city gate there was a judge or often a village tribunal who meted out justice. Throughout the day persons would come to have their complaints heard and just settlement pronounced.

I would like to suggest that we apply this image to our own corporate life. As congregations we are like cities where disagreements among people sometimes arise. However, Christ's peace moves among us as judge, questioning our mixed motives, nudging our self-righteous attitudes and stubbornly set behaviors, and urging us toward solutions which are good for the entire body, rather than for just one person. This judge rules in favor of reconciliation and healing.

Living this way is not easy. Christ is not physically present with us. We cannot literally go to him as people went to the judges at the gates in biblical days. In seeking solutions to disagreements we will first need to prayerfully examine ourselves: am I truly committed to the common goal of building up one another, or do I simply want my own way?

Though my way may not be wrong in itself, a higher priority may be to allow the judge to rule in someone else's favor. Clearly I will need to stop acting as if I had a corner on the truth.

Second, in addition to inner examination and listening, we must also listen to our sisters and brothers. In their voices we may hear Christ's word of wisdom and discernment, the words of peace that reunite us as a body. If we expect, anticipate, and look for the expression of Christ's peace among us when we disagree, we may be surprised at how keenly we will experience it.

Just as there will always be wars and conflicts in the world, so our life within Christ's body on earth will also have need for peacemaking. If together we can experience Christ's peace as ruler, impartial referee, and wise judge, we can offer a model to those around us, not as a perfect people, but as a people who are continually seeking the way of peace.

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Praying for Peace

Lois Schrag

WOMEN IN MISSION groups have a beautiful gift to share with the peace movement. Women who are already committed to prayer as a vital element of their group life can direct their focus to praying for world peace. Great potential for change lies in the intelligent, Spirit-led prayers of women who are sensitive to the power of communicating with God.

Some time ago my fifth grade Sunday school class and I searched the Gospels for occasions of prayer in the life of Jesus. In Luke 22 we found that, as in all important matters in his life, Christ faced his final confrontation with the authorities by immersing himself in prayer.

Today confrontations of immense proportions are developing between nations in the race to arm themselves against one another. The time has come to follow the example of Jesus and to respond to impending violence with intense prayer.

The kind of prayer for which we are calling is not a passive ritual which requires little more than the repetition of empty words. Instead it is the disciplined, specific, informed, active kind of prayer we find throughout the Bible.

Biblical prayer petitions God for healing and wholeness, peace and justice. It cries out against unrighteousness and sin, injustice and calamity. This kind of prayer is prayed in the context of a concrete historical setting.

The setting in which wc find ourselves today is that of the growing prospect of nuclear war. Though a response of fear and trembling seems natural, it is not appropriate for those who claim to find their true security in God. Perhaps in our effort to calm our fears, we have overlooked the power and loving nature of our God. Prayer can bring us back to the source of our faith.

We will probably be brought to our knees as we recognize our need for forgiveness for our complacency and our participation in war making. Out of this confession and repentance can come changed lives and active peacemaking. We will find ourselves asking for courage and thus opening ourselves to God's direction for faithful living.

We will become the repositories for hope in a world that knows despair more than hope. Don Kraybill in his book *Facing Nuclear War* has called prayer the "Christian hope anchored in God's ability to turn crosses into resurrections and to triumph ultimately."

Prayer with the expectation that God will act in us and in the world can become that solid foundation which peace requires.

The Mennonite Central Committee U.S. Peace Section is encouraging the formation of Peace Covenant Prayer Groups. John K. Stoner, executive secretary, has summarized the idea in this way: "The purpose of the Peace Covenant Prayer Group is to pray in the Spirit of Jesus with the mind for world peace with a circle of friends who have covenanted together to accept the disciplines of prayer, study, witness and action

Continued on page 13

THE COM CONNECTION

Guest columnist for this issue is Alice Ruth Pannabecker Ramseyer, former missionary to Japan who currently makes her home in Elkhart, Indiana.

MAY I INTRODUCE Noriko Ishiya. In November of last year she married Tadayuki Ishiya, pastor of the Hiroshima Mennonite Church, and thus became the newest member of the pastoral teams of the Japan Mennonite Christian Church Conference.

Soon after Noriko began attending worship meetings in Hiroshima, the church organist moved to another city. As a group, we were never too strong on singing a capella, and were in dire need of an organist. Although she had not had a lot of experience playing hymns, she agreed to try to come to the rescue. She practiced so diligently that by the second Sunday, an old injury in her arm had flared up, and the arm had to be taped. She was willing to play for worship even when it meant pain with every movement of her fingers.

Both her vocation and her avocation are cooking. In her job as home economics lab supervisor at the women's college, she worked eight hours a day with foods, then went home and baked something interesting to bring to church for the meal after worship. Needless to say, everyone enjoyed her weekly contributions.

Although Noriko had attended church for a number of years, she had not made a definite public decision to be a follower of Jesus Christ, primarily, it seemed, because her parents were not in favor of it. When she finally told her parents that she had decided to take the step of baptism, they were very unhappy, even angry.

Noriko did everything she could to be a caring daughter and did not go through with baptism at Christmastime.

The soul-searching, the depth of commitment to Christ, the heartbreak that can come to an obedient, caring, only child, when she considers publicly defying her parents came to all of us with a new poignancy as we watched her struggle with this problem, trying to decide what was the right thing to do.

She would be going against her parents' wishes, not only in becoming a Christian, but also in thinking of marrying a man who was a pastor.

When it became apparent that her parents would never give their permission, she decided to go ahead with baptism at Easter.

Noriko and her husband are now expecting an addition to the family. We ask your prayers that the new life in their home will become a bond which will bring the new grandparents into a supportive relationship with their daughter and her husband, and, in the future, into a new understanding of the love of Jesus Christ, so that they, too, may become his disciples.

PROGRAM 6

TRUE WISDOM FOR CHRISTIAN PEACEMAKERS

Gloria Miller

"Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God" (Matt. 5:9 KJV). This beatitude tells us that peacemakers must work at their task because they are to "make" peace, and their reward is a very special title, "children of God," a title that makes them joint heirs with Christ!

In the New International Version of the Bible there is a section in James 3 subtitled "Two Kinds of Wisdom." We need to consider wisdom in relationship to peacemaking because peacemaking includes making decisions with wisdom, having biblical knowledge, using words wisely, and conducting ourselves with integrity.

James 3:17 says, "But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere" (NIV).

James says wisdom "comes from heaven," therefore, it is not a human achievement, but a divine revelation. The writer of Ecclesiastes says it comes from God. Solomon beautifully describes wisdom as "the breath of the power of God, and a pure influence flowing from the glory of the almighty."

Notice that the words in James personify wisdom because James says wisdom IS, not wisdom IS LIKE; in John 4:7 John says GOD IS LOVE, not God is like love.

Wisdom is the personification of each of the words suggested in James 3:17, so, let's look at these eight words to see what they have to do with peacemaking.

Wisdom is pure

There is an inscription on the entrance to a Greek temple which says, "He who would enter the divine temple must be pure; and purity is to have a mind which thinks holy thoughts." If that inscription is paraphrased with a Christian perspective it might say, "Whoever would truly know God, must look at this world and the people of this world through the eyes of God and with the mind of Christ."

The Christian peacemaker has the following characteristics:

1) He or she has a global perspective of all of God's family, and doesn't think of them as American, Canadian, or Soviet, and sees corporate greed as exploitation of South Africans, Haitians, and Central Americans.

2) He or she knows God is faithful, and that security rests in God and not in military strength. God is King and Lord! He told the Hebrews that he is a jealous God and constantly reminded them of his supernatural saving power.

3) He or she believes God's love is unconditional and all life is sacred. God proved this on Calvary.

The role of the Christian peacemaker is to call sin, sin. A Christian peacemaker calls the insane nuclear arms race sin. When a nation's military budget escalates at the expense of human needs, that is putting our security in military strength instead of God.

That is idolatry, and idolatry is sin.

The Christian peacemaker prophetically calls out, "Stop! Turn around! Repent!" A Christian peacemaker does not judge sin only by its absoluteness, but by its satanic, deceptive subtleties. The role of the Christian peacemaker is to make judgments from a divine perspective.

READ: Exodus 1:15-20

It's odd, and a little unsettling,to reflect upon the fact that English is the only major language in which "I" is capitalized; in many other languages "You" is capitalized and the "i" is lower case.

—Sydney J. Harris

CONSIDER: When did the midwives decide that the king (government) was wrong in requiring them to kill (sin)? Why did they not obey the king of Egypt? How did God reward them? How does that reward relate to *shalom* (peace)?

CONTINUE READING: Exodus 2:1-10

CONSIDER: Can even children refuse to participate in sinful requirements of the government? Notice Miriam's bravery, quick thinking, wise decision making, and careful speech. What was the result of saving Moses?

FOR YOU: How do you need to expand your global perspective? To what should you be saying no, and how? How can you do this publicly?

Wisdom is peace loving

If you love something, you go after it, you chase it. So, if you love peace, then chase after it, work for it.

Romans 14:19 says, "Let us then pursue what makes for peace and mutual upbuilding" (RSV). How beautiful it is that the things that make for peace are good for everyone.

We know that God is love and that the kingdom way is peace. We see a nonviolent Jesus Christ in the New Testament. Hebrews 1:3 says, "The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being. . ." (NIV).

This is the son of God who preached the Sermon on the Mount, who told Peter to put away his sword, and who stood before Pilate and said, "My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews. . ." (John 18:36 KJV). He finally suffered and died.

Paul says we are imitators of Christ. We are not to count the cost because we are citizens of another, not earthly kingdom.

Persons who pursue peace are often misunderstood, harassed, imprisoned, and sometimes martyred. Peacemakers love peace and chase after it. It doesn't matter to them what the cost will be.

READ: Romans 14:17-19, Matthew 5 and 6, Romans 12, and 1 Corinthians 12. Another good resource is Donald Kraybill's book, *Upside Down Kingdom*.

CONSIDER: What are kingdom values, kingdom motivations, kingdom virtues, and kingdom gifts? What is the fullness of love? What is kingdom maturity?

Is there some place that you should initiate reconciliation? Is there an organization in which you are working for peace such as your church, a local peace group, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, or the Fellowship of Reconciliation?

PRAYER: Lord, develop my citizenship in your kingdom. Give me a push to chase after peace. Amen.

Wisdom is considerate and submissive

We will consider these traits together, not because they are synonymous, but because they compliment one another. Together they mean courteous pliability, a willingness to listen, and allowing for and even yielding to

Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited.

Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody. If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. Do not take revenge, my friends. . . . Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

Romans 12:14-19, and 21 (NIV)

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another's point of view.

TO DO: Stand opposite another person, about eighteen inches apart. Plant your feet firmly and touch palms. Now push as hard as you can against one another's palms. Relax. Now stand the same way, but just barely touch each other's fingertips.

The shorter person should now pull her hands slowly back, keeping her fingertips touching the other person's fingertips. Keep pulling back slowly with the other person following fingertips to fingertips. The shorter person should pull back as far as possible, even bending backward. Now relax and notice how the taller person's feet stood firm. Neither person gave up her foundational principles. One yielded a little and the other came her way.

The role of the peacemaker is to be a negotiator.

READ: Psalm 85

NOTICE: Take note of the beautiful literary phrases in this psalm, and also how the paired words compliment each other.

CONSIDER: Is there a situation in which you can be a negotiator? Maybe you can try negotiating in your family, at work, or in your church.

Think of explosive situations in history or in your own experience and guess about what the outcome could have been if negotiation had taken place.

PRAYER: Lord, may I love and be faithful to you. Amen.

Wisdom is mercy and good fruits

The Greeks thought of mercy as pity. For Christians mercy is a reflection of God's pity for those who suffer unjustly and also for those who suffer as a result of their own actions.

A Christian peacemaker feels a responsibility for all issues of injustice—exploitation and hunger, war and famine, the arms race, human rights, poverty, and the prison system. Social issues are not isolated from the gospel; they are part and parcel of the gospel. They are part and parcel of a life of discipleship.

Mercy and good fruits are coupled together because Christian pity is mercy which offers practical help. It may mean absorbing hostility. It is not an emotion. It is action, and prayer must be action.

It is time to get up off of our knees and do something. One can pray, wear a purple ribbon, write to a congressperson, sponsor a prisoner, work for the nuclear freeze, do voluntary service or plant a garden, but do something.

We cannot say that we have truly pitied anyone until we have helped. The role of the Christian peacemaker is to work for justice for all people.

READ: Habakkuk 1:1-4, Micah 6:8, and Galatians 5:22, 23. An excellent resource book is *IF. . . a big word with the poor* by Donald C. Bakely.

CONSIDER: Which social issue touches you the most deeply? Why? Have you prayed about it? Now what are you going to do about it?

PRAYER: Lord, help me to do something!

Wisdom is impartial and sincere

To live impartially and sincerely we need a personal relationship with God that is unselfish and inclusive. It also needs to be a relationship with God's created humanity, a compassionate, caring relationship.

The role of a Christian peacemaker is to be a disciple and to live the way of the cross.

> **Prayer, while offered for the sake of the world, will first change those who pray.**
>
> **—Jim Wallis**

READ: Matthew 28:18-20 and Matthew 25:31-46

TRY: Sit quietly and think about how much you love God, and how much God loves you and all people. In your imagination wander all around the world viewing the misery and agony experienced by much of humanity.

Now ask God to touch your heart in a new way. Be brave and ask God to tell you what he wants you to do. Plan to do something with his help. Say aloud, "So be it, Lord."

ACCEPT: Read and accept the promise in James 3:18, "Peacemakers who sow in peace raise a harvest of righteousness" (NIV). That's prophetic!

PROGRAM "HOW-TO" IDEAS

1. Ask the women in your group to read the preceding lesson prior to your program. Suggest that they read each "Wisdom is . . ." section for a daily devotion.

On the day of your meeting have a program of personal sharing of ideas and insights which have come as a result of studying and praying.

2. For your devotional time at your meeting use the material suggested for Program 6 in the 1982-83 Devotional and Resource Packet which is available from the WM Office, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114 for $1.

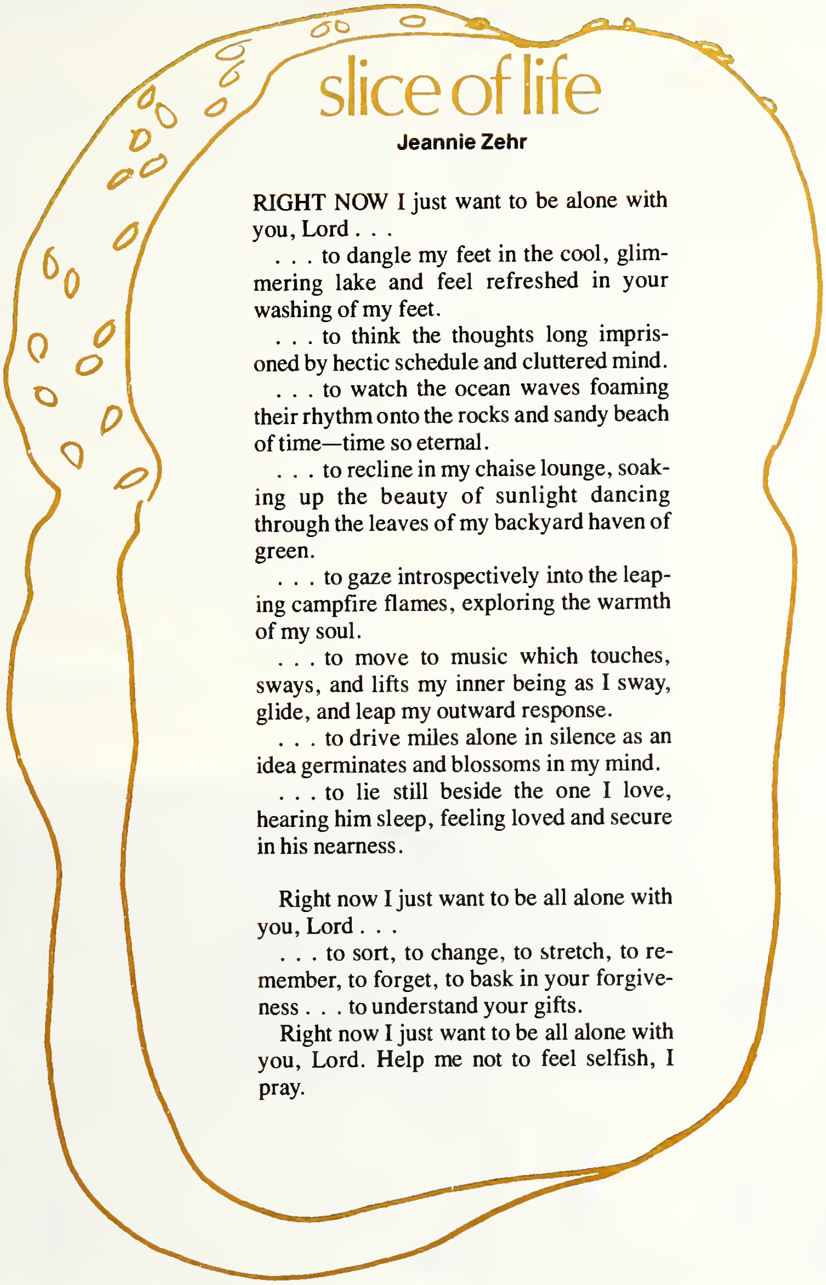
3. Write for the Peace Kit as suggested on page 16 of this issue. Have several women come prepared to share about some of the books in the kit. Consider purchasing and placing several of these books in your community libraries.

You ought to also consider buying one or all of the following books for your church library: *A Gift for God* (Harper & Row, 1975), prayers and meditations from the journal of Mother Teresa of Calcutta; *Celebration of Discipline* by Richard J. Foster (Harper & Row, 1978); *Upside Down Kingdom* by Donald Kraybill (Herald Press, 1978); *If . . . a big word with the poor* by Donald C. Bakely (Faith and Life, 1976).

4. Consider starting a Peace Covenant Prayer Group as suggested in the article "Praying for Peace," found on page 5 of this issue.

5. Plan a program for your entire congregation using the study and format of this lesson, "True Wisdom for Christian Peacemakers," or order the 16mm color film "Something Beautiful for God" for a $25 rental fee from: Co-Workers of Mother Teresa in America, Inc., Office of Treasurer, Box 6546, Rochester, MN 55901. Tel.: (507) 288-8238. Another source is Visual Aids Service, University of Illinois, Champaign, IL 61822. Tel.: (217) 333-1360. Rental, $22.50. In either order, ask for by title and number 70021.

This film shows Mother Teresa in Calcutta engaged in work in an eye clinic, with leprosy patients and in an orphanage. It portrays a woman who shares her "radical discipleship" to her Lord.



slice of life

Jeannie Zehr

RIGHT NOW I just want to be alone with you, Lord . . .

. . . to dangle my feet in the cool, glimmering lake and feel refreshed in your washing of my feet.

. . . to think the thoughts long imprisoned by hectic schedule and cluttered mind.

. . . to watch the ocean waves foaming their rhythm onto the rocks and sandy beach of time—time so eternal.

. . . to recline in my chaise lounge, soaking up the beauty of sunlight dancing through the leaves of my backyard haven of green.

. . . to gaze introspectively into the leaping campfire flames, exploring the warmth of my soul.

. . . to move to music which touches, sways, and lifts my inner being as I sway, glide, and leap my outward response.

. . . to drive miles alone in silence as an idea germinates and blossoms in my mind.

. . . to lie still beside the one I love, hearing him sleep, feeling loved and secure in his nearness.

Right now I just want to be all alone with you, Lord . . .

. . . to sort, to change, to stretch, to remember, to forget, to bask in your forgiveness . . . to understand your gifts.

Right now I just want to be all alone with you, Lord. Help me not to feel selfish, I pray.

Recycling People

Sue Neufeld

MENNONITE COMMUNITY CLOSET in North Battleford, Saskatchewan, buzzes with activity. Bagfuls of used articles are carried in at a regular pace through the front door. Then the back doorbell rings and a station wagon full of boxes is unloaded into the annex.

As boxes pile up in the work area, we work aggressively to recycle those articles that won't sell in the condition in which they came to us. With the clatter of buttons, the snipping of scissors, and the hum of sewing machines, these "worthless" articles are soon transformed into saleable items.

The Closet focuses not only on the selling of used or recycled articles, but focuses even more on the "recycling of people."

On any one day the group of workers may be composed of volunteers from local churches or the community, a patient from the psychiatric hospital placed at the Closet for rehabilitation, a young person with learning disabilities who has been placed there by the local school for the retarded, and persons assigned to the Closet through the court Fine Option Program.

"Fine Option" means that a person who has been assessed a fine by the court can choose to work for a nonprofit organization in lieu of paying the court fine. Such a person must work one hour for every $4.25 (current minimum wage) of fine assessed.

When the required number of hours has been completed the Closet coordinator forwards a form to the court informing the court that this particular person has completed his or her "Fine Option." The fine is then considered paid.

Three young women, visibly uneasy, walk into the Closet. "We'd like to work off our fine here," one shyly states. As we try to determine what kind of work they can do, Lynn remarks, "My grandmother used to make quilts like that," and points to a recycled quilt.

"Would you like to learn to make a

Fine option girls at work

quilt?" I ask. She quickly responds, "Oh! Could we?" So we begin the task of choosing colors, and cutting squares for their quilt.

As day by day the quilt progresses, so does the interaction. We respond to such questions as "Why do you work here if you don't get paid?" and "Who are the Mennonites?"

Meanwhile, I have also learned that all three young women are still in their teens. Two are already mothers, assuming the role of single parents.

During another week you might meet Norma. Norma's husband was driving the car while under the influence of alcohol. He is a taxi cab driver and so needs his driver's license to continue his job. So, Norma covered for her husband by telling the police that she was driving instead of him. She was thus charged with driving a vehicle without a valid driver's license.

You might hear Rose share a bit about herself. The court charged her with creating a disturbance.

Prior to her arrest she had "gone out for a few beers." Suddenly her estranged husband joined the group. Soon an argument started and before long a fight broke out. After appearing in court she was assessed a fine to pay. If she defaulted she knew she would have to serve a prison term. The other option was to "work off the fine."

The value of recycled garments may at times be difficult to assess. The changes brought about in the lives of the people working at the Closet are even more difficult to assess.

As we sew and share we become aware of how different the world of some of these people is from that of our own. It is difficult to imagine how we would function under similar circumstances.

As we sew and share we discover that God is ministering to us through those to whom we have reached out.

Praying for Peace

Continued from page 5

toward the abolition of nuclear weapons and war in their lives and the world."

Is your women's group, or small group, ready to make such a covenant with God and with one another? Your covenant would be a solemn promise to God and to each other to pray diligently for peace. Remember always that your covenant is with God who is always faithful.

Here are some suggestions to aid your group in the discipline of prayer:

1) Choose a particular time of day for prayer and be adamant in reserving it. There is value in all group members choosing the same time.

2) Go to some private place where you are able to concentrate your thoughts. An aisle in the grocery store would not be a good choice of location!

3) Focus on a particular verse from God's Word. The Bible is rich with references to God's promise of peace. You may want to begin with prayer for our enemies in keeping with Matthew 5:44, "But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven" (RSV).

4) Come together as a group to celebrate the joy of salvation. Praise God!

Watch in future issues of *Window to Mission* for further suggestions to help you in your personal, as well as your corporate prayer life.

If your group would be willing to share with others about your experiences with prayer, write to Jeannie Zehr, editor of *Window to Mission*, 4226 Maplecrest Road, Fort Wayne, IN 46815, or the WM Office, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.

Together let us claim the promise of 2 Chronicles 7:14, "If my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and pray and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land" (RSV).

WM office jottings from Joan

Elsie Flaming

Helga Froese

Irene Klassen

Here is the slate of nominees to be voted upon at the Women in Mission business meeting at Bethlehem '83 in August.

FOR PRESIDENT
Elsie Flaming is a member of the North Leamington (Ontario) United Mennonite Church and has been in a WM group for twenty-seven years. She is past president of the South West Ontario WM. She has served on the WM executive committee as second vice-president from 1977 to 1983 and on the Commission on Overseas Mission. She has also been on the nominating committee of the Canadian Conference of Mennonites. Elsie is married to Henry Flaming. She is a musician, nurse, mother, and grandmother who enjoys homemaking and volunteering.

* To fill the ballot, another nominee is needed for the office of president. With consent of the individual, nominations may be sent to the chairperson of the nominating committee: Alyce Reimer, 1063 Axton Rd., Bellingham, WA 98226. Tel: (206) 384-4346. Additionally, nominations for any office will be in order from the floor with prior consent from the individual.

FOR SECOND VICE PRESIDENT
Helga Froese, who lives in Steinbach, Manitoba, is a member of the Steinbach Mennonite Church and is a nurse by profession. She and her husband, Frank, have three children. Helga has served as president of her local women's group and also as chairperson of the local missions committee. For three years she was a member of the Manitoba women's MCC Auxiliary committee and served for one year as its president. Helga's other activities include singing in the church choir, volunteering at school, sewing, and walking.

Irene Klassen, "a registered nurse by profession and a homemaker by preference," lives in Calgary, Alberta. As a member of the First Mennonite Church, she has been involved in Sunday school, choir, women's groups and the historical committee of the church. She served from 1970 to 1975 as president of Alberta Women in Mission and for five years on the executive of the Women's Inter-Church council in Calgary. Irene and her husband, John, are the parents of four children. Irene's hobbies include reading, writing, and collecting memorabilia.

contributors

Mary Lehman Yoder (Peace Within the Body) is a graduate of Goshen College and Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries. She has worked as a hospital chaplain but since the birth of little Katie a year ago, Mary has been mothering full time. She and her husband, Michael, and Katie make their home in Normal, Illinois. Mary teaches adult and high school Sunday school classes, preaches occasionally, and is an MYF sponsor.

Lois Schrag (Pray for Peace) is the Women in Mission representative on the General Conference Peace and Justice Reference Council. Lois is a homemaker, mother of three teenagers, and works part-time in a photography studio. She teaches Sunday school in her home church, Kingman Mennonite Church, Kingman, Kansas, and is currently serving as chairperson of the Western District Conference Retreat Committee.

Gloria Miller (Program 6: True Wisdom for Christian Peacemakers) is a member of the Women in Mission Literature Committee and serves as the WM representative to the U.S. MCC Peace Section. She and her husband, Merle, are actively involved in the Good Shepherd Mennonite Church, Sioux Falls, South Dakota. Gloria is deeply interested in all aspects of peace education and related issues, and is on the board of the South Dakota Peace and Justice Center. She also carries out her interest by leading workshops on parenting for peace and justice in the South Dakota and Minnesota area.

Jeannie Zehr (Slice of Life) edits *Window to Mission* from her home in Fort Wayne, Indiana. She is the mother of a college-age son and a daughter who is a junior in high school. Her husband, Marv, pastors the Maplewood Mennonite Church where Jeannie is also employed as director of the church nursery school.

Sue Neufeld (Recycling People) and her minister husband, David, have three sons. They are deeply involved in church and community ministries in North Battleford, Saskatchewan. Sue works part-time as a nurse and is board chairperson of Mennonite Community Closet.

Joan Wiebe (WM Office Jottings) serves as coordinator for the General Conference Women in Mission with an office at 722 Main, Newton, Kansas. She is actively involved in Faith Mennonite Church, where her husband, Leonard, is pastor. They are the parents of three children, one in high school and two in college.

credits

COVER: Sculpture entitled "Compassion" by Midener.
ARTWORK: P. 3, Erica Esau.

Mary
Lehman Yoder

Lois
Schrag

Gloria
Miller

Jeannie
Zehr

Sue
Neufeld

forecast

A Bible study on 1 Peter 2:4, 5 will be the focus of the August-September issue of *Window to Mission*. The issue will also introduce the program theme for Women in Mission for 1983-84 and share the six program-lessons which will be featured in the magazine for use in your WM groups.

Printed in U.S.A.

bright ideas

A SPECIAL PEACE KIT is available from the Women in Mission Office, 722 Main, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. This kit contains a number of books on peace-related topics for children, youth, and adults. Order the kit, take a few days to look at the materials, and share them with others in your congregation, such as your church librarian. Then you may want to order one or several of the books for your church library, your personal library, or as a gift for your community library. Such a gift is an excellent way to share your concern for peace with others.

The year 1983 is the Year of the Bible in the United States. If your group is interested in doing something special during this year, why not contact the American Bible Society, P.O. Box 2222, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10164.

They have many excellent materials listed in their catalog. You may want to make use of some of their filmstrips, buy some of their Scripture tracts to share with others, or become part of their Bible-a-Month Club. As a club member you can contribute three dollars a month which will place a copy of Scripture in the hands of someone who needs it.

One of the WM groups at Gospel Mennonite Church, Mountain Lake, Minnesota, shared a meaningful program with the neighboring Bethel Mennonite Church women last summer. They focused their program on the theme "It isn't going to be easy to live a daily committed life," using poems and musical selections.

Another interesting program theme which you may want to tuck away for possible future usage was used by the Western District WM at its fall meeting. They had two speakers, one focusing on "What We Do Does Count—as a Person," and the other focusing on "What We Do Does Count—as a Group."

Do you have an idea to share with others? If so, send information to Jeannie Zehr, 4226 Maplecrest Road, Fort Wayne, IN 46851.

All WM presidents will receive WM delegate registration blanks in May. Presidents should not mail these forms to the WM office, but rather bring these completed forms to the WM registration desk at General Conference in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. However, if your group is voting by proxy votes, it will be necessary for you to send this information to the WM office by the end of June.

Tabola, Lesotho—Three years ago Mennonite Central Committee worker Bert Reimer distributed mealie-meal, ground white maize, in this rural Lesotho community. The next year Sam and Emily Mohono, village church leaders, suggested that the church take on a gardening project with MCC's help to grow their own food instead of relying on imported aid. The rains came during the next two harvests, but this year the rains stopped, and the harvest will be meager at best.

One-act plays that address contemporary issues of peace are being sought for a contest sponsored by the Goshen (Ind.) College communications department. The contest is open to anyone, but members of historic peace churches are especially encouraged to enter. Scripts entered should be unpublished and unproduced. They must be postmarked no later than Dec.31, 1983, and sent to contest coordinator Lauren Friesen, assistant professor of drama at Goshen College. The winner will be announced by May 1, 1984, and will receive $500. Write Lauren Friesen, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526.

The poorest fifth of the Canadian population gets 4.2 percent of the total income. The second poorest fifth gets 10.6 percent. The middle fifth gets 17.6 percent. The second richest fifth gets 25.3 percent. And the richest fifth gets 42.3 percent. This distribution pattern, documented in *The Canadian Fact Book on Poverty—1983*, recently published by the Canadian Council on Social Development, has changed little in the last 30 years.

U.S. delegates will face proposal to create national structures

Newton, Kan.—Besides the regular General Conference business sessions and the special joint sessions to be held with the Mennonite Church at Bethlehem '83, GC leaders are busily planning the agenda for a special caucus of U.S. delegates to the triennial sessions.

Those delegates should plan to gather for the special session on the afternoon of Monday, Aug. 1, when the major agenda item for the meeting will be a proposal to formally create a U.S. Caucus, a U.S. Council and a Commission on Home Ministries U.S. If passed, the new structures would handle business and issues primarily related to U.S. members and their churches.

The caucus will include reporting by CHM and discussion on Mennonite Indian Leaders Council, Hispanic ministries, Selective Service registration and other peace-related items.

The structural modification is an attempt to resolve some of the ongoing frustrations experienced by administrators and delegates in bringing program proposals and other items which are primarily U.S.-oriented to the multinational setting of the triennial sessions for action. In Canada, the Conference of Mennonites in Canada has served as an effective clearinghouse for agenda of national concern. CMC meets annually.

The U.S. structures would be much less elaborate. The proposal's postscript reads, "A primary concern in formulating the new structures is to find a formula which is simple and cost effective, yet meets our needs. Adjustments will be made as needs become apparent."

Briefly, the proposal calls for (1) a meeting of the U.S. Caucus at each General Conference, with delegates from U.S. churches as voting members; (2) a U.S. Council composed of the U.S. members of the General Board executive committee, district presidents and members on CHM U.S. elected by the U.S. Caucus. This body will plan U.S. Caucus meetings, deal with agenda that does not fall within the mandate of CHM U.S. and will meet annually during the conference's Council of Commissions; and (3) a CHM U.S. composed of U.S. members of CHM plus two members elected by the U.S. Caucus. It will function as a department of CHM.

Concerning the latter, the proposal reads, "The members of CHM and CHM U.S. shall together decide what is to be the agenda and/or responsibility of CHM U.S. . . . The funding for CHM U.S. will come from CHM. While U.S. congregations may designate contributions for CHM U.S., it is not expected that CHM U.S. will do fund raising apart from CHM. To the extent possible, CHM U.S. shall be funded from U.S. sources. The CHM U.S. budget shall not be included in prorating contributions to General Conference from Canada."

According to Stan Bohn, executive secretary for CHM, approximately one-third of the commission's current program and agenda would shift to the new department, including Mennonite Indian Leaders Council, U.S. draft issues, Hispanic ministries and some church planting work. If the creation of CHM U.S. is approved, meetings will be held later in the year between CHM, CMC's Congregational Resources Board and the Mennonite Church's home ministries department to delineate the exact separation of programs and negotiate funding formulas. *Larry Cornies*

Got a resolution? Adhere to guidelines, leaders say

Newton, Kan (GCMC)—Since Bethlehem '83 will be a joint event of the General Conference and the Mennonite Church, less time will be available for business sessions dealing with strictly GC agenda than is the case at other triennial sessions. Because of the compressed time frame, a set of guidelines has been established to expedite the handling of resolutions during GC business sessions.

Vern Preheim, general secretary, has indicated that individuals or groups wishing to present resolutions to the conference should take note of the following: (1) Resolutions should be endorsed by a group, preferably a congregation, area conference or conference committee, before being presented on the floor, and (2) Resolutions should indicate the nature and scope of the need, how the need is to be addressed, what financial and personnel resources will be needed, the source of these resources and who will be responsible to implement the resolution.

Individuals, congregations or conferences wishing to submit resolutions to the General Conference triennial sessions should do so as soon as possible by writing to the Resolutions Committee, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, or by contacting one of the committee members: David Hillegas, Quakertown, Pa.; Anna Juhnke, North Newton, Kan.; Carol Suter, Pandora, Ohio; Menno Epp, Calgary, or Henry Rempel, Winnipeg.

According to Preheim, the following items are already scheduled for major discussion: *Justice and the Christian Witness* (final presentation and action), the human sexuality study (progress report for reaction), the issue of withholding of taxes on the wages of employees (General Board is bringing a recommendation for consideration) and inter-Mennonite unity and cooperation (Mennonite Church and General Conference general boards are bringing a joint resolution).

Twenty-five percent of the people in U.S. prisons are Vietnam vets. And the suicide rate among Vietnam vets throughout the country is 33 percent higher than the national average.

Mennonite Central Committee recently initiated a project designed to help leprosy victims and disabled people living in four villages of Luang Prabang province in Laos. Through this program MCC will provide them with items that will help them improve their living conditions and earn additional income. "The opportunity to work in these villages is very exciting to us," report Linda and Titus Peachey, MCC country representatives here. "These villagers represent some of the poorer people in Laos."

Warm weather brought out a record two-day crowd of about 8,000 for the 16th annual West Coast Mennonite Relief Sale in Fresno, Calif., April 8-9. Sale receipts totaled $162,000, a record, while the men's chorus offering of over $8,800 brought the total receipts for the weekend to over $170,000. The sale highlight was the 1919 Cadillac donated by Ted and Ruth Hochhalter of Lodi, Calif. The automobile brought $34,500, the highest bid ever at an MCC sale.

Opportunities to celebrate the past will be plentiful at Bethlehem

Goshen, Ind.—Bethlehem '83 is already a byword in the minds of many Mennonites, as Aug. 1-7 approaches, when the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church will gather in separate and joint sessions for the first time.

Bethlehem '83 is also beginning to be known as the time and place where North American Mennonites will be celebrating the 300th anniversary of their first permanent settling in Germantown (1683-1983).

Mennonite historical committees have arranged several events and programs for Bethlehem '83 participants to celebrate the latter.

Tours. The meetinghouse tours organized by Ray Hacker and other Mennonite historians from eastern Pennsylvania will be offered as half-day tours on three different days. These tours will make us aware of our colonial Mennonite heritage in general, as well as highlight our knowledge of selected aspects of the life of our Mennonite congregations in eastern Pennsylvania. Each tour will stop at two or three meetinghouses for presentations on specific topics of interest from the seven selections possible. Fifteen different authorities will provide background on subjects such as Pennsylvania Folk Art, Mennonites and the Civil War, and the Sunday School Movement in the Mennonite Church.

For those who have a whole morning and afternoon, the Germantown/Philadelphia tours will provide rich material on the Germantown area, both history already made and history in the making.

The Germantown historical tour will take a look at Germantown history, still very much alive. Tour members will participate in a hymn sing in the 213-year-old Mennonite Meetinghouse. Other highlights are a visit to the house built by William Rittenhouse in 1707 and a home-cooked meal at the historic Chew House.

The Philadelphia/Germantown missions tour will cover present-day involvements of the Mennonite church actively working in a racially mixed urban area. The work of the Diamond Street congregation will be one such major point of interest, with an emphasis on history as it is happening now. Both of these tours will be offered on three different days (noon meal included). Preregistration for the tours is encouraged and should be noted on the official Bethlehem '83 registration form, which all congregations should have received.

Seminars. Of the dozens of seminars to be offered at Bethlehem, eight will concentrate on our historical past and how our past can help strengthen our present life together.

Stories. Throughout the conference, including the evening worship period, historical vignettes will remind us of the many and varied experiences we have needed to face and respond to. Our heritage, rich in story and character, will come alive in these presentations.

Music. Fourteen new Anabaptist-Mennonite hymns have been chosen for publication and use at Bethlehem '83. Many of these are based on old 16th-century hymns and have been reworked to give strength to current congregational life.

Youth Heritage Day. On Saturday, the youth convention is organizing a heritage day, including an encounter with our 16th-century roots. This will be supplemented with special historically oriented media of many types and group response.

A highlight of the week in terms of our historical identity will be the historical committees' (GC and MC) presentation on Thursday evening, which will focus on our 300-year celebration as Mennonites, prefaced by the Harold Moyer historical drama *The Plow and the Sword.*

For many of us from various cultural and ethnic backgrounds who have joined with New World Mennonitism since 1683, whether as individuals or as groups, Germantown will be a part of each of us as we meet at Bethlehem. Celebration of our history can serve mightily in helping us to respond in faith to God as we move forward in our daily walk. *Rachel Shenk*

MC and GCMC representatives plan for Bethlehem '83 at an October 1982 meeting.

Three Benedictine monks in Belgium are working on electronic tools which, says one of them, could mean that "the Bible no longer exists as a book, but in the form of an electronic recall system, a Bible data bank." Reported in *Word-Event*, periodical of the World Catholic Federation for the Biblical Apostolate, this "revolutionary development" would be a major step toward "meeting the pastoral needs of millions who have no access to Scripture, especially the poor and illiterate."

The Catholic bishops of the German Democratic Republic (East Germany) recently issued a pastoral letter on peace. For the most part the letter promotes what it calls the "authority" of the Sermon on the Mount. "The arms race between East and West is an intolerable offense," write the bishops. "It makes the balance of power into a balance of terror. It destroys trust between peoples and nations. And it increases the misery of starving people in the Third World. . . ." Thus far, no East German newspaper has been willing to print the full text of the letter, and West German papers have condemned it as "politically inadmissible."

The El Salvador Children's Relief Fund is financing part of its work through sales of all-occasion greeting cards. Profits are used on behalf of refugee children in El Salvador and Honduras. The cards feature a drawing of a small child holding a dove. To order, write the fund at 50 Oak St., #503, San Francisco, CA 94102 (10 cards for $5).

South African C.O. status declared 'a very limited victory'

Cape Town, South Africa (MCC)—On March 30 the South African Parliament passed the Defense Amendment Bill, which provides for alternative service by religious military conscientious objectors. The bill, which was passed after heated debate between the ruling party and opposition groups, is the first official recognition of military conscientious objectors in that country.

Judy Zimmerman Herr, South African Mennonite Central Committee country representative, reports that South African groups supporting conscientious objectors see the new bill as "a very limited victory." They are strongly opposed to its severe treatment of conscientious objectors. MCC workers relate closely to groups that participate in the conscientious objector movement in South Africa.

Opposition to the new legislation centers on its harsh treatment of so-called "political objectors," those who object to service in the South African Defense Force on political, ethical or just war grounds. The law stipulates that political objectors can be sentenced to six years in prison.

The new law requires religious objectors to serve six years (one and one-half times the required army service term) in government controlled "community service." The state determines working hours, to whom the salary will be paid, which professional associations the objector may belong to and what political activities he can particpate in. This has been compared to the much criticized "banning" technique the government uses to silence opposition.

The opposition Progressive Federal Party described the bill as "a cynical attempt at appearing to create a fair deal for conscientious objectors while in fact it tries to wipe out conscientious objection by ruthlessly intimidating potential conscientious objectors."

There is widespread opposition within South Africa to its war in neighboring Namibia, which the United Nations has denounced as illegal. Many South Africans also object to the SADF defense of *apartheid*, legislated separation of blacks, whites and other races. An estimated 3,000 men (only white males are required to do military service) refuse to report for military training every year, and most of them emigrate from South Africa to avoid serving in the SADF. Herr, originally from Pittsburgh, writes that "it is likely that the long service terms and jail sentences mandated by the new law will only increase their numbers."

Richard Steele, a South African conscientious objector who served a year in military detention during 1980-81 and is presently a student at Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., writes, "I see this legislation as a sign that the military and the government are at least willing to seriously consider the issue of conscientious objectors and alternative service. I regard the struggle for adequate recognition of alternative service as a *process*—we are still at the early stages."

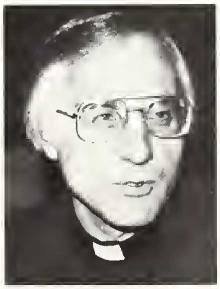
Gumbleton delivers Keeney lectures at Bluffton College

Bluffton, Ohio (BC)—"The most serious moral issue in the public order today is the nuclear arms race," Bishop Thomas P. Gumbleton told the audience at Bluffton College's weekly forum April 19. Speaking as the 1983 Bluffton College Keeney Mennonite Peace Lecturer, Gumbleton urged Christians to begin a "daily commitment to work for a world of peace."

The soft-spoken Detroit native is a pacifist and was one of the leading Roman Catholic bishops drafting a pastoral letter denouncing President Reagan's nuclear arms program (see p. 258).

"This is the most dangerous moral issue which involves not only the survival of our bodies, cities and our planet, but also the survival of the well-being of our souls, our spirits. We're in danger of jeopardizing our eternal salvation. What does gaining the whole world profit us if by doing that we destroy our spirits?" he asked.

Gumbleton



Bishop Gumbleton outlined four moral conclusions about the United States' nuclear arms program in the letter of the bishops.

"First of all, we declare that all counterpopulation warfare is always and absolutely immoral."

The second conclusion is that a first-use strategy, which, he said, is the current U.S. policy, is "a complete, unjustifiable moral risk, and we call for a turning away from that policy."

Next, on the issue of limited nuclear war, in which weapons would be used only on military targets, the bishop concluded that, based on the just war theory, "if you could guarantee us it would not get out of control, then in theory you might be able to morally justify this view," but the committee is highly skeptical, he said.

Finally, Gumbleton said that the public's belief that the strategy of deterrence is what has prevented war for 38 years, has "serious moral flaws because it compels us to get caught up in the nuclear arms race."

The CPS #18 Dennison, Iowa, Reunion will be held July 15-17 at the Coe College campus in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Meals, beds, linens will be furnished for an estimated cost of $18 per day. Those interested should register by July 1 by writing Russell L. Yoder, Parnell, IA 52325, phone 319/646-2274, or Gilbert Alliman, 1851 Melrose Ave., Iowa City, IA 52240, or Paul L. Troyer, Route 1, Kalona, IA 52247.

An average of 70 members of the Bergthaler Mennonite Church, Altona, Man., gathered Feb. 28, March 1 and 2 to study "Pathways to Faith," led by Bernie Wiebe, editor of *The Mennonite.* The sessions focused on nurturing children to faith, ordinances and family worship. Phil Bender, instructor at Elim Bible Institute in Altona, led four sessions on Sunday afternoons in February and March on "End Times and Christian Hope." Also, on a mandate from the congregation, the world missions commission cooperated with the Altona Evangelical Mennonite Mission Church to draw up a petition against abortion.

An interdenominational foodgrains bank was formed at a meeting held in Winnipeg on April 13. The new Canadian Foodgrains Bank will become the umbrella organization for relationships with organizations such as the Canadian International Development Agency, the Canadian Wheat Board and Revenue Canada. It will also arrange for shipment of grain to the port in the receiving country. MCC (Canada) is one of the members.

RECORD

CALENDAR

Aug. 1-7 — General Conference Triennial Sessions and Mennonite Church General Assembly, Lehigh University, Bethlehem, Pa., theme: "Christ the Cornerstone"

Canada

July 8-12 — Conference of Mennonites in Canada, Winnipeg

Central

June 24-26—Mennonite Marriage Encounter, Wooster, Ohio

Northern

June 16-19 — Northern District Conference, Bethesda Church, Henderson, Neb.

Pacific

June 16-19 — Pacific District Conference, Glendale Church, Lynden, Wash.

MINISTERS

Barry Lesser will become pastor at Zion Church, Swift Current, Sask., June 1. A graduate of Swift Current Bible Institute and Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg, he previously served as assistant pastor at Zion Church.

Gerald Neufeld began serving on a half-time basis at Graysville (Man.) Church in May. He is a 1982 graduate of Winnipeg Bible College.

Galen Penner has begun serving as pastor at Tiskilwa (Ill.) Church. A 1982 graduate of Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., he also attended Freeman (S.D.) Junior College and Bluffton (Ohio) College.

David Ruby will become pastor at Flatrock Church, Cecil Lake, B.C., in July. He just graduated from Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg.

WORKERS

Walter and *Marie Dirks*, after resigning from the pastorate at Flatrock Church, Cecil Lake, B.C., in May 1982, spent June-September 1982 and February-April 1983 in voluntary service work with the Northern Cheyenne Mennonite churches in Busby and Lame Deer, Mont.

Edward and *Elizabeth Enns* have accepted an invitation to serve Umsiedler churches in West Germany for two years, beginning this fall. Edward, who will be completing an eight-year term as executive secretary of the Congregational Resources Board of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada this summer, will serve as a Bible teacher for nine Mennonite congregations in West Germany who have many Umsiedler members.

Larry Nikkel has been appointed executive director of Prairie View Mental Health Center, Newton, Kan., effective this fall. He replaces *Elmer Ediger*, who has been chief executive officer of Prairie View since 1957. Ediger will continue on the Prairie View staff as special assistant to the executive director. Nikkel joined the Prairie View staff in 1967 and has been administrator since 1974.

Richard Rosenberger has been reelected chairman of the Bluffton (Ohio) College board of trustees.

Harold J. Schultz, completing his fourth three-year contract as president of Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., has accepted a new five-year term, beginning July 1.

Jeannie Zehr has been re-elected secretary to the Bluffton (Ohio) College board of trustees. She was first elected to the board in 1976.

Assistant pastor needed

Assistant to the pastor is required by the **Bergthaler Mennonite Church of Altona**, Man., with particular responsibilities for youth work. This is a full-time position under the direction of the leading pastor. Pastoral duties also to include preaching, visitation and counseling. Resumes, to be received by **May 31, 1983**, should include educational qualifications, personal background and plans, related work experience and references.

Our congregation, situated in southern Manitoba, is a large congregation of just over 600 resident members. The job description allows for further training and some continuing education. This position is available in the summer or fall of 1983.

Send inquiries to:
Chairman, personnel committee
Bergthaler Mennonite Church of Altona
Box 90
Altona, MB R0G 0B0.

Houseparents needed

The Mennonite Collegiate Institute is seeking a Christian couple to serve as student residence houseparents for 1983-84. Communication and leadership skills are required.

For complete information contact:
Ken H. Loewen, principal
Box 250
Gretna, MB R0G 0V0
204/327-5891.

Old Testament opening

Applications are invited for an opening in teaching Old Testament and Hebrew at the **Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries**, beginning academic year 1984-85. Desired qualifications: doctoral degree and teaching or ministry experience.

Send resume and list of references to:
Jacob W. Elias, dean
Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries
3003 Benham Ave.
Elkhart, IN 46517.

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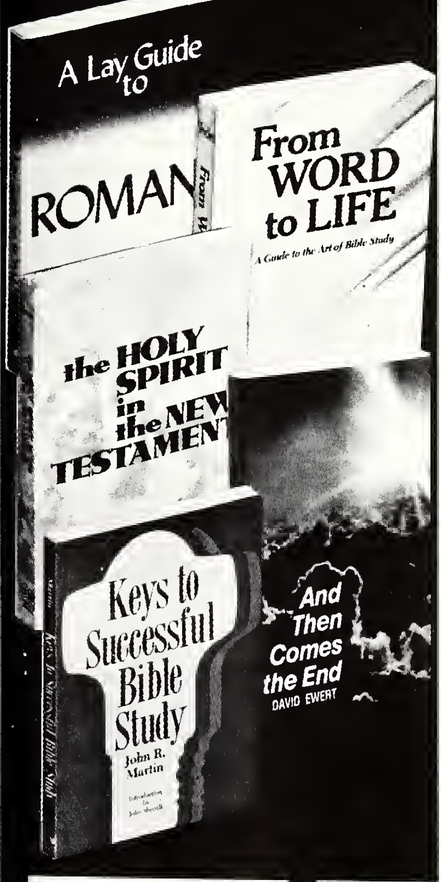
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the HOLY SPIRIT in the NEW TESTAMENT
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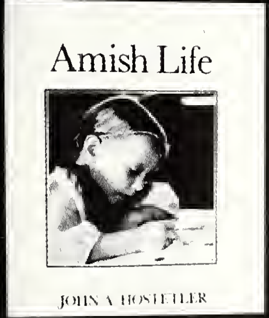

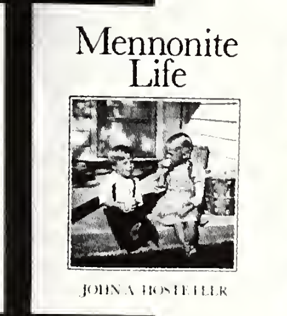

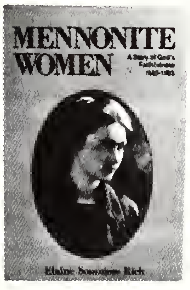

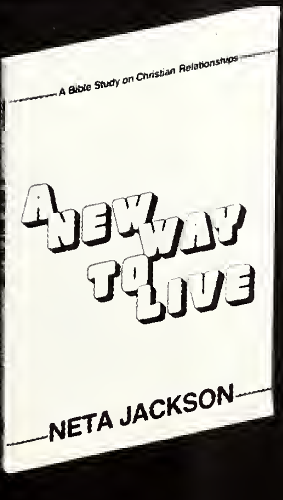

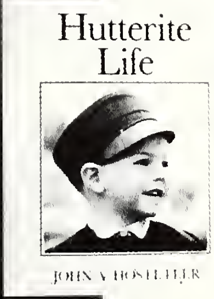

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Here are the completely revised, full-color editions of ***John A. Hostetler's*** booklets that have sold over one million copies. Here is the authoritative introduction to these people. Illustrated with beautiful color photographs throughout.
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Willard Swartley demonstrates how the church has used the Bible to define and disrupt the status quo. He shows how the Bible can be used for authoritative guidance on social issues today.
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Mennonites in Illinois

Willard H. Smith wrote this comprehensive history of all branches of Mennonites from their first arrival in Illinois about 1830 to the present. Over 600 pages of stories and families, and the rich contribution Illinois Mennonites have made to the greater church.
Hardcover, $24.95

Mennonite Women

"With warmth, integrity, and imagination, ***Elaine Sommers Rich*** has written a perceptive, orderly, engaging account. The pages are filled with stories of individual women, women whose commitment to God, church, and family spilled over into action and set the scene for daily living. This book is a gift to the whole church, to men as well as women, providing new insight, understanding, and awareness."—Hope Lind, *Provident Book Finder*
Paper, $9.95

Our People: The Amish and Mennonites of Ohio

Levi Miller "introduces us to his own people—their rich history and character, their firmly held customs and religion, their idealism weighed in the light of their humanity. Carefully chosen photographs by Bruce Glick . . . memorably illustrate the text."—Leonard Gross, Historical Committee of the Mennonite Church
Paper, $2.50

Keys to Successful Bible Study

John R. Martin's book "may well deserve recognition in the upper ranks of introductory works on methodological Bible study . . . With great ease and clarity of style, the author leads the beginning student through the whole range of Bible study procedure while maintaining a high level of reader interest."—*Christianity Today*
Paper, $5.95

And Then Comes the End

"In the power of the Holy Spirit, we are currently living as members of the kingdom. This book by ***David Ewert***, is the best overall introduction to these issues. He clearly explains various current positions, discusses relevant biblical passages, and develops an eschatology that is centered in Christology."—Mark Lau Branson in *The Readers Guide to the Best Evangelical Books*
Paper, $6.95

Outstanding Bible Study Aids

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Neta Jackson's biblical study exploring the nature of relationships. This do-it-yourself study shows how to build relationships and deal with relationship problems.

"The new way to live which Neta Jackson describes—leads us into—is the way of love, the way that starts with a cross and leads to glory, the glory of God in personal living and human affairs. I commend this book to you."—Joseph Bayley
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The Holy Spirit in the New Testament

David Ewert surveys the whole range of New Testament authors to discover what they have to say on the Holy Spirit and what this means for the life of the believer and for the church. This unique systematic approach allows new understanding.
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J. C. Wenger explains the meaning of Paul's original words and sentences in simple, easy-to-understand English. "This commentary is written for people who lack formal theological training, but are ready to think seriously about their faith. They will find a wealth of material here that can be put to use immediately in their lives."—Walter A. Elwell, *Christianity Today*
Paper, $8.95

From Word to Life

"***Perry Yoder*** has put together a fascinating and useful guide to serious Bible study . . . This will be a stimulating and productive resource for all those who want to get beyond superficiality in their study of the Scripture—and for those who simply want a better understanding of modern biblical scholarship."—*The Other Side* magazine
Paper, $12.95

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The Roman Catholics: A new peace church?

Steve Sprunger

A powerful, far-reaching and historic statement urging the nation's 51 million Catholics to be "peacemakers" was ratified by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops in Chicago May 3 by a 238-9 vote. The 44,000-word Pastoral Letter, to be used as a teaching document, is titled "The Challenge of Peace: God's Promise and Our Response." This third draft, the culmination of efforts of over two years, was approved with amendments putting the Roman Catholic Church in a position approximating that of traditional peace churches in several areas. Bishops:

- changed wording from "curb" to "halt" in a statement calling for support of "immediate, bilateral, verifiable agreements to halt the testing, production and deployment of new nuclear weapons";
- called "morally unjustifiable" the initiation of nuclear war in any form;
- insisted "nuclear deterrence" could be justified only under strictly conditioned terms—when the United States is making serious efforts to achieve disarmament;
- said that under no circumstances could nuclear weapons be targeted on primarily civilian population centers;
- condemned "retaliatory actions which would indiscriminately take many innocent lives";
- expressed "highly skeptical" thoughts about whether nuclear war could be "limited, contained or won in any traditional sense."

The 150-page document does not endorse a nuclear freeze nor even mention the word, but it in every way supports the concept, saying, "We are called to be peacemakers, not by any movement of the moment, but by our Lord Jesus Christ."

The chairman of the five-man ad hoc committee which compiled each of the three drafts was Joseph Cardinal Bernardin of Chicago. In his opening address, Cardinal Bernardin defined the premise of the letter to be that ". . . nuclear weapons and strategy constitute a qualitatively new moral problem. The nuclear age is not simply an extension of the questions on warfare addressed by our ancestors."

Roach, Bernardin and Daniel Hoye confer just before the NCCB's May 3 session.

However Archbishop John R. Roach of Minneapolis, president of the NCCB, said while "one might be able to argue that a more absolute non-violent position" might be a stronger statement, "what we have presented is a *very, very* strong position on peace, one with which our people can live, one which is real enough to have a strong impact, even on the whole policy discussion in our country."

Prelates insisted that they spoke "as pastors, not politicians," and identified themselves as "moral teachers in a tradition which has always been prepared to relate moral principles to concrete problems." Bishops also said they have not only seen but shared "the terror in the hearts and minds of our people . . . since we now face possibilities which are appalling to contemplate." Church leaders spoke of the "crisis of a nuclear war which threatens the existence of our planet; this is a more menacing threat than any the world has known before." Acknowledging the complexity of the nuclear problem, they said, "Our arguments in this Pastoral must be detailed and nuanced, but our 'no' to nuclear war must, in the end, be definitive and decisive."

The document reiterates Catholic belief that it is the duty of a nation to defend itself and its people against aggression on the basis of the Augustinian "just war" philosophy. But it also upholds the tradition of non-violence and supports positions of pacifism and conscientious objection to war by individuals in the Catholic Church.

Few would disagree that the final version of the Pastoral puts the church in the forefront of the debate on nuclear warfare. Mennonites could also feel at home with a move by Reformed Judaism; the Union of American Hebrew Congregations in Canada and the United States during the previous week called for a drive for a verifiable arms freeze by the Soviets and the United States.

Mennonites might have a mixed response if called upon to fast for peace, but the Catholic prelates called on their flock to eat less food on Friday and abstain voluntarily from meat as tangible evidence of their penance for peace. They voted to lead the way by fasting on each Friday of the year.

Local bishops will doubtless interpret the letter differently. But it will nonetheless have a profound influence for years to come in forming the Catholic conscience and focusing public discussion on the morality of violence.

The authors of the letter summarize its purpose when they state at the end, "We fear our world and our nation are headed in the wrong direction . . . in our quest for security we are actually becoming less secure." They also added the words of Pope John Paul II in calling for "a 'moral about-face.' The whole world must summon the moral courage and technical means to say no to nuclear conflict, no to weapons of massive destruction, no to an arms race which robs the poor and vulnerable. . . ."

If Mennonites have seen themselves as a relatively small and lonely group crying in the wilderness, they have only to listen now to voices of many of the nation's 51 million Catholics. The message is not new. But it has been heard. And it is growing louder.

Steve Sprunger is director of Ecumedia News, Room 856, 475 Riverside Drive, New York, NY 10115.

LETTERS

Accountable for affluence

The article "The Use of Money Is Related to Salvation" (March 15 issue) was important and timely.

The Bethel Mennonite congregation of Winnipeg is to be commended and encouraged for catching the vision of our stewardship responsibility. The quotations of Jake Pauls and Hugo Peters, given in this article by Betty Dyck, are certainly sound and biblical. I do believe that we will be held accountable for the affluence and opportunity which the Lord is permitting us to experience. The world needs are great. *Arnold Claassen, 725 S. Spencer, Newton, KS 67114*

April 18

Surveillance of media

A Canadian Broadcasting Corporation news item this morning prompted me to write this letter, which has been stewing in my mind for many months. The item referred to a recent conference dealing with public media treatment of the current nuclear dangers. The conference had concluded that only consistent public pressure would coerce the major media to report accurately; at present it was not doing so.

Such "consistent public pressure" I believe calls for surveillance by a number of dedicated people. I can see a retired person with much energy left or any other person with substantial time and energy heading up such groups. A leader would collect a small group of interested people—each able and willing to devote several hours a week—to monitor carefully a designated aspect of the media. On a continuing, consistent basis they would then seek to correct perceived distortions.

An article in the *Winnipeg Free Press* (April 21 issue) illustrated what can be done. Carl Ridd, an astute observer of the situation in Central America, wrote a substantial analysis of the editorial stance of the *Free Press* toward Nicaragua and challenged the paper's sudden change of editorial position.

Last November I attempted a similar correction via a letter to the editor. Events with which I was familiar had been grossly distorted, not by distorting facts, but by choice of heading and subheadings, by the details selected for reporting, by the organization of the details and most of all by the glaring omissions.

Smaller papers like *The Mennonite* are helpful. However, they reach only a minority of the population. Majority opinion is shaped by the larger public media. Do we have people with the time, dedication and perseverance to work at this important mission? *Jake Letkemann, 594 Strathcona St., Winnipeg, MB R3G 3E7*

April 25

Instructor/academic dean

Swift Current Bible Institute is seeking applications for the position of instructor/academic dean.

This is a permanent position beginning in the fall of 1983. Candidate must have at minimum a bachelor of theology degree plus one year of education at a Mennonite college or seminary. Three-quarter time devoted to instruction—teaching Old Testament and other areas to be negotiated. Quarter-time academic dean—duties primarily curriculum development and relating to faculty on classroom concerns.

Interested persons apply to:
David Ortis, principal
Box 1268
Swift Current, SK S9H 3X4
Phone 306/773-0604.

Pastor needed

Grace Mennonite Church, membership of 237, is looking for a senior pastor. The church is located in a predominantly Mennonite community of approximately 5,000 people.

Direct inquiries to:
Harv Loewen
Box 1616
Winkler, MB R0G 2X0.

Physical education instructor

Rosthern Junior College invites application for the position of physical education instructor and athletic director. Applicant should have an appreciation for private school education and a desire to correlate Anabaptist theology with his area of work. The person will need to teach a few other classes, preferably math or science.

Address inquiries or application to:
David Winter
Rosthern Junior College
Rosthern, SK S0K 3R0
306/232-4222.

Peacemakers directory

We are interested in developing a free directory of groups and individuals that would be interested in offering overnight hospitality to folks involved in peace and justice ministries around the world. To be included in the directory we will need to have your name, address, phone number and any other pertinent information. We will send a copy of the directory to everyone listed. Send information to: *Pat Murray, Anawim House, Catholic Worker Community, 509 North Genesee St., Waukegan, IL 60085*

April 25

books
to educate / to challenge / to live by

Still in the Image

Waldemar Janzen

The author, a Bible teacher at Canadian Mennonite Bible College, has collected some of his addresses and papers into a coherent and eminently readable volume. Subtitled "Essays in Biblical Theology and Anthropology" it offers several groupings of essays on subjects that attempt to respond biblically to the question: What does it mean to live as a human being under God? The first group, Bridging the Distance, addresses the question of divine-human communication. The second group, Blessings and Boundaries, looks at human existence and limitation. The third group, In Quest of Place, considers our orientation in God's world. The fourth group, The Burden of War, responds to the problem of human destructiveness.

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Make peace the Jesus way

Rebecca Burkholder

Peacemaking as a practical part of everyday life is the goal of the newly formed Dallas Peace Center (DPC) in Dallas.

The center, guided by a board of members from the Dallas Mennonite Fellowship, is extending the Anabaptist-Mennonite message of peace through education, action and research.

"We're concerned with making peace more than an idea or an empty word; it must be visible and concrete," said DPC director John R. Burkholder. The center, funded by Mennonite denominational agencies and the local congregation, called Burkholder as its first director in August 1982.

Burkholder is completing a sabbatical leave from Goshen (Ind.) College, where he is a professor of religion and director of peace studies.

Lectures, workshops and dialogues are basic DPC activities. Burkholder frequently speaks to churches and other groups on peace theology, the nuclear arms race, conflict resolution and Third World concerns. He also speaks at area universities and seminaries.

Currently the DPC is cosponsoring—with the Fellowship of Reconciliation—a series of "peace revivals" in local congregations. These meetings call for personal response to the New Abolitionist Covenant, a statement on abolishing nuclear weapons.

Personal dialogues with dozens of pastors, teachers, businessmen and others, and with several organizations provide chances to find out what they are doing, publicize the DPC and its resources and form a peace network.

"Networking may not produce immediate results, but it's creating a structure and an atmosphere which will promote active peacemaking," said Burkholder.

Some of the contacts through DPC activities have become participants in the Dallas Mennonite Fellowship. The church's stance on peace and justice offers an alternative to the typical Dallas church. Burkholder believes peacemaking goes hand in hand with calling people to Christ. "We're interested in an evangelism that introduces Jesus as Prince of Peace," he said.

Meeting and speaking with others to spread the message of peace is one side of DPC activity. Another part is direct involvement in peacemaking.

Burkholder, his wife, Susan, and six other members of the fellowship are trained volunteer mediators with the Dispute Mediation Service of Dallas. The service helps people settle problems through mediation rather than resorting to violence or the court.

Volunteer mediators spend a day or two each month working on cases; they have a high success rate. "It's rewarding to start working with a case where there is hostility between people and see them settle their differences peaceably," said Susan.

DPC tries to prevent violence, but deals also with the consequences of violence. Responding to an emergency situation, DPC works with political refugees from El Salvador and Guatemala.

Thousands of refugees, after escaping from their war-torn countries, have fled to Texas. Casa America Libre, DPC's refugee program, assists in their applications for emigration to Canada. Efforts to gain political asylum in the United States for these political refugees have not been successful.

Ernst Harder, pastor of the Mennonite congregation, also directs this program, assisted by three Mennonite Voluntary Service workers and the DPC intern from Bethel College, Miriam Wiebe. Funding has come from MCC. Since the summer of 1982 over 300 refugees have sought help at Casa America Libre.

Burkholder sees the wide range of DPC activities as positive. "We're dealing with peacemaking from a personal to a global level," he said. "We're reconciling people on a one-to-one basis and, at the other extreme, warning people about the global disaster of nuclear war and militaristic policies. At all levels, we're challenging people to turn enemies into friends."

To date the DPC's push for peace has met with mostly favorable response. Even though ultraconservative Dallas is an unlikely place for a peace center, Burkholder is pleased with the small but growing group of peace activists from other denominations who have joined together in new efforts this past year.

With Burkholder's year over this summer, the center's next director and future financial support are unknown. "Things have gone well so far," said Harder, "but the future of the center is our worry now."

The DPC in all its work is trying to follow Christ's example of peacemaking. "The center came into being out of our Christian concern for all people," said Harder. "We're working out of a conviction that Jesus Christ would help people in this way."

J. R. Burkholder (right) with Dallas fellowship members Sam Nance (left) and Ken Kohler

Did we host an angel unawares?

Mary Derksen

The beggar is gone and so is my peace.

Wasn't it enough that I gave him supper when he arrived at 10:30 p.m.? And then put him up for the night? And served him a good hot breakfast this morning?

When the telephone rang at 8:45 last night, my husband was teaching his English Bible class in the meeting room downstairs. I answered the phone, "Moshi, moshi" (the Japanese telephone greeting). "Moshi, moshi. Is this the church? May I speak to the pastor?"

"I'm sorry," I replied, "he's busy with a class."

"My name is Tomita and I want to come over to talk," was the response.

"Where are you?" I asked.

"I'm at the Beppu station," he replied.

There was something vaguely disturbing in the voice. A beggar? One had come earlier this week already. I knew my husband was tired and still had to prepare for Sunday's message. Should I just say it is too late? I knew that if I did I would have to face the righteous wrath of my husband (he can't say no to anyone) and my own conscience. My better judgment won. Or was it the still small voice of God? "My husband is teaching a class now, but call back in half an hour," I said reluctantly.

When the phone rang again, my husband answered. "He's coming here now," Peter told me. We waited an hour, and just when we decided he had probably changed his mind, the doorbell rang.

There he stood—fortyish, bedraggled, knotted long hair, straggly beard, torn pants, shabby coat and loaded with two bulging bags. Probably all his worldly goods. Oh, no, I thought. I went to serve him something hot. It was winter and cold. When I came back into the church room where Peter had taken him, my fears were confirmed. "He wants to stay for the night," my husband told me. "What shall we do?" Peter is careful not to push me at times like this. I hated the thought of putting down clean flannel sheets for this dirty man. "We could take him to an inn and pay," Peter suggested, as if guessing my thoughts.

This same beggar had been in our home a year ago. Yet his "home" was 1,000 miles away. What brought him begging in the cold of winter? Why didn't he stay in his hometown and work? There is always something for those who are willing to work. Did he enjoy this kind of life? Peter plied him with questions. We knew beggars tend to migrate south in the winter months. Since one can have a bath in any public hotspring in Beppu for less than a quarter, Beppu is a natural attraction.

We decided to keep him for the night. When Peter asked him if he enjoyed this life, he asked, "Will you give me breakfast tomorrow morning?" I suppose he wouldn't be a beggar if it bothered him.

At midnight, with our guest settled in a warm bed, we finally crawled wearily into ours. Peter nudged me, "We studied about the Good Samaritan tonight in our Bible class."

"It's a good thing we didn't send him away then, isn't it?" I mumbled sleepily, and we both laughed.

In the morning I served Mr. Tomita a hot breakfast of miso soup, toast and tea. My husband sat with him for a while, then came upstairs to join me for breakfast. My face flushed and my heart turned faint as we read the *Rejoice* devotional for Feb. 12. Here we were reminded that the kingdom of heaven was like a banquet, where people were celebrating together. Our beggar was eating alone downstairs. Whatever possessed us? A guest for the night, and then not eating together? Where was the compassion of the Good Samaritan? Of the Father welcoming the prodigal son? Who would ever show him God's love and compassion if we didn't?

It was Saturday. Usually my heart praised the Lord all morning as I cleaned our apartment and the church downstairs. Today I had lots to think about. Mother Teresa of India, taking in dying beggars, spoonfeeding them and closing their eyes in death, came to mind. The Lord's chastening was upon me. As if that wasn't enough, Peter called me into his study. He was having his devotions. "Here, listen to this," he said, reading Hebrews 13:2: "Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares." An "angel unawares"? This beggar? But did not the Lord also say, "Inasmuch. . ."?

My "inasmuch" was sadly lacking. I had fed and given this beggar a bed grudgingly. I didn't want my clean world disturbed. Now my heart was in need of a thorough cleaning. Ah, this proud, cold heart of mine. How could I claim to be a missionary? But God's message of forgiveness and cleansing came to me in 1 John 1:7—"If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin." Our "angel" was gone. Perhaps he would return some day.

Mennonite heroines

Mennonite Women: A Story of God's Faithfulness, 1683-1983, *by Elaine Sommers Rich (Herald Press, 1983)*

Reviewed by Muriel Thiessen Stackley, 4830 Woodland Ave., Lincoln, NE 68516

Eminently anecdotal, here is a resource for every Mennonite pastor's bookshelf and every Mennonite church library. Let none again say, "I'd include women in my illustrations if I could just find material on them." Here are stories galore of Mennonite Church women.

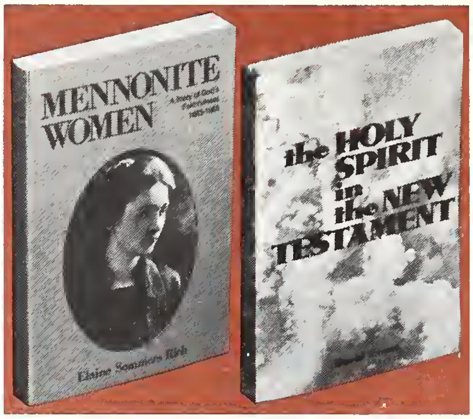
Mandated by the Women's Missionary and Service Commission of the Mennonite Church, *Mennonite Women* is a welcome companion piece to Mary Lou Cummings' *Full Circle* and Gladys V. Goering's *Women in Search of Mission*, documenting General Conference women and Women in Mission, and Katie Funk Wiebe's *Women Among the Brethren*, documenting the Mennonite Brethren.

Elaine Rich has written an easy-to-follow account. There are teacherly introductions for each chapter (divided by categories of activity and service) telling you exactly what to expect; there are editorial postscripts at the end of each. Consider using the book as a text. Any church-related discussion group would benefit from these stories.

Meet Clara Eby Steiner (1873-1929), who articulated the idea that women's groups should and could promote the total work of the church. This is in contrast to the public confession that two women in Ohio had to make for the "sin" of trying to start a sewing circle.

Meet Phebe Yoder (died 1981), who in her 34 years in Africa operated nursing stations in garages and dispensaries on truck fenders, started schools, supervised construction of 10 buildings, wrote seven primary reading books, sold books from her self-designed van, taught in theological school and helped translate the Bible into Jita and Swahili. This juxtaposed with the widespread fear (in 1915) that the "women's movement"—the fledgling WMSC—would become a competitor with larger church structures.

I was intrigued to learn that the MCs (as well as the GCs) have their own Ella Bauman—Ella Shoup Bauman (1892-1969) whose story times with Youngstown, Ohio, children in the 1940s grew in five years into what became Rockview Church, officially staffed in 1952.



Meet the young widow Veronica Livengood Peachey (1791-1884), who dreamed three times that she would see a ruddy-bearded stranger on a bay horse (complete with white forehead spot). When such a stranger did come she recognized him, checked out the horse, and in due time consented to marry him—Christian Schmucker, a widower with 10 children.

Meet Marion Charlton Eshelman (1890-1973), who would no doubt have been the first principal of Eastern Mennonite School had she been a man. The faculty committee, seeking a "capable, conservative" person, invited her to teach, and Daniel Kaufman wrote that her reply was "one bright ray of promise for the school." L. J. Heatwole enjoined, "I was so favorably impressed . . . that the only regret I feel about it is she is not a man."

This is a fine compilation, but I wish more attention would be given to women who excelled in the arts. Perhaps another book is in order.

A Spirit primer

The Holy Spirit in the New Testament, *by David Ewert (Herald Press, 1983, 324 pages)*

Reviewed by Heinz Janzen, pastor, Trinity Mennonite Church, Hillsboro, Kan.

This work gives a comprehensive outline of the New Testament teaching on the Holy Spirit. It follows the order of the New Testament writings from the Gospels through the letters to Revelation but also deals topically with the various teachings on the Spirit.

Topics include the work of the Spirit in Jesus' life, Jesus' promise of the Holy Spirit for the life of the church, the fulfillment of the Spirit's coming at Pentecost and a number of aspects of the Spirit's work in the life of the church down to our day. Primarily it is biblical theology based on the best current scholarship. Ewert has made wide use of such writers as Michael Green, F. F. Bruce, Raymond Brown, J. R. W. Stott and I. H. Marshall.

Ewert does careful exegesis of pertinent passages such as John 14, Acts 2 and 1 Corinthians 12-14. He tries to use the best biblical tools and still be clear to the lay reader, though his term "paraenetic" is not found in Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary. He attempts to deal with issues in the life of the church today though it is not a pastoral handbook with quick answers for specific problems.

The book tries to be as accurate as possible in defining various terms such as baptism, filling, sealing and earnest without being more nor less specific than the text allows, since much teaching on the Spirit describes similar truths with different vocabulary. Ewert also distinguishes an epochal turning point such as Pentecost from ongoing practice in the life of the church today. He also distinguishes later church customs from New Testament teaching and does not try to read current practice back into the text.

He tries to be fair to the issues raised by the charismatic renewal, such as glossolalia, healing and the baptism of the Holy Spirit. He does allow for the unusual gifts like speaking in tongues. He would have been helped by consulting scholars of a third way such as Morton Kelsey and Rodman Williams.

His discussion of gift discernment on pages 266, 267 is one-sided in view of the mad scramble in most churches to fill organizational slots regardless of the ability of people to fulfill particular tasks.

Overall this is a helpful and much needed work done by a careful scholar out of the Anabaptist tradition. He takes for granted a transcendant God and a personal Holy Spirit, as a corrective to the activism and intellectualism that dominate so many. He provides balanced teaching when all too many read the Bible selectively. This work will be useful for reference in church libraries and for a text in congregations that like an extra challenge.

MEDITATION

I overslept but tasted new wine

The alarm rang—it must have. But it was already 8:15 a.m.—too late for our family to get to Sunday school. We thought we could still get to the worship service, but knowing that the 14 miles of snow-covered roads between our church and us were treacherous, we decided to worship at a small Mennonite church nearby.

After a quick breakfast, we and our two sons drove to the church, only to discover the service canceled because of the weather. We debated our options.

"Why don't we just stop at one of the churches on the way home?"

"Why not."

We chose a plain, white church with a bell tower, a huge cemetery and a sparsely filled parking lot. Getting out of the car, my son expressed the nervousness we all felt. "Are we allowed to go to this church?" The sign read, "Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church," and I said, "I don't think I've ever been in a Lutheran church before." We slipped into a pew near the back of the sanctuary, noting plenty of room for the two dozen worshipers.

The pastor's sermon title was "Your Life Can Be Changed," based on the wedding feast at Cana. He said water is necessary for survival and to quench thirst. But water is too boring, dull and tasteless for a celebration. Life, when it is turned in upon itself, seems dull; an encounter with God changes our focus from ourselves and our situations to God and his eternal values—turning life into a joyous celebration.

I was reminded of the dullness in my life. Each week seemed just like the week before: packing lunches, cleaning and cooking, doing laundry, studying, relating to the same people, panting through the same exercises, praying the same prayers. I was bored.

My thoughts went from daily circumstances to my spiritual health. The refreshing water tasted stale to my soul.

Then I noticed that the jars used to gather water at the marriage feast were jars that had been used in the Jewish rites of purification. Each jar was filled with water, yet when the wine steward tasted it, the water had become wine. For me, the water in the jars symbolized the purification of my sins. Because the Jewish rites were performed over and over, the jars reminded me of routine. These everyday jars that held water for cleansing also held wine for celebration. Could the everyday routine of my life that had been cleansed by Jesus also hold wine for celebration? Could the stale water of my life be turned to wine?

I remembered the pastor's last point: A life turned in upon itself creates boredom, but an encounter with God can change boredom to celebration. Many of my thoughts had been revolving around the things I was doing, the things I wanted to do, the feelings I had and the people I related to. I had been concentrating on the jars—looking at them, thinking of them, scrubbing them, even adding flavoring to sweeten the water. But one thing was clear: I couldn't change the water into wine. At the wedding feast, an encounter with Jesus resulted in a miracle. I knew then that he could do the same for me, but I must give him my jars.

As we left the church, my son asked, "Mommy, how long were we in there?" "Almost an hour." "But it seemed so short." Yes, it was short, but while we were there, he had forgotten his nervousness and I had tasted wine.

Diane I. Bleam

CONTENTS

Giving clothes, food and other relief goods to needy people comes almost naturally to Christians. We often give from what we have already used or what we cannot use—but we do give. Who can resist giving when you hear a sick, malnourished baby cry?

Heartwrenching relief needs continue in our torn world and we will continue to give. But relief needs to at least be a partner to development. We must help people to help themselves and affirm the sacred dignity that God accords them.

Mennonites have been leaders in both relief and development. This issue acknowledges that. But how are we doing with inner spiritual growth? How do we handle money? Does our love for music sometimes get in our way?

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Diane I. Bleam, 51 Orchard Lane, Macungie, PA 18062, writes of a family incident that resulted in unexpected blessings.

Brenda Suderman, Box 902, Winkler, MB R0G 2X0, just graduated from Canadian Mennonite Bible College. During the past school year, Brenda did a practicum assignment—for her practical theology course—with *The Mennonite*. Some of her writing has appeared in earlier issues; some will follow.

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EDITORIAL

Mennonites: money and music

Brenda Suderman

A sign in a religious bookstore caught my attention. "Mennonites/money/music." The label was accurate; shelves underneath the sign contained books on Mennonite history and theology, money management and music.

But for me this alphabetical arrangement became more than a guide to finding books. Somehow it seemed a fitting characterization of who and what Mennonites are; this sign became a "sign event."

Calling an innocently lettered sign a sign event probably interprets more than was intended by its creator. But it stimulated me to examine the significance of money and music for Mennonites.

We encounter many signs and usually ignore them readily. However, ordinary things can have deeper meanings. An anecdote is told about a woman waiting at a street corner and being inspired for the remainder of the day by a sign above the pedestrian lights, "Walk with light." Meant to have a purely informative function, that sign gave hope to this woman.

Signs also function in predictive ways. Like road signs, biblical signs point to the future, remind us where we have come from and assure us that we are heading in the right direction. The Exodus was seen as a sign of God's saving power and was viewed as assurance that God was present and actively concerned about the fate of Israel. Jesus Christ's life, death and resurrection signified who he was—the Son of God. The Immanuel sign in Isaiah 7:14-15 pointed to the coming Messiah. Even the name of the child—Immanuel, God with us—assured Israel of God's continuing presence. Biblical signs were also prophetic in warning people of impending doom and judgment if they continued to be unfaithful.

For me the bookstore sign "Mennonites/money/music" (or "Mennonites: money and music") has characteristics of the biblical sign. It is informative, prophetic and predictive. In its informative function it characterizes and explains much that is important to the Mennonite church: a wise use of resources—particularly financial—and a rich heritage of music used to the glory and praise of God.

The sign regarding money needs to also include a discussion of the present issue facing Mennonites. Our church and conference budgets are being kept to a minimum because of decreased giving. Money can be a powerful force to control policies and programs. Too often we make our life decisions by the criterion of financial gain. Yet present and past struggles between Mennonites and money can be overcome in our attempts to use our financial resources creatively, as exemplified in a renewed emphasis on simple living.

Music making is a vital aspect of the Mennonite church—past and present. Wherever a group of Mennonites gathers, there is music making. Let's be thankful that it is a part of our heritage and continue to enjoy this gift through participation in the making and the listening.

When I consider the predictive aspect of my sign event, I believe that we—the Mennonite church—will continue to keep money and music in our future. We should continue to use responsibly these gifts of God but not allow them to dictate our future.

This leads to the most important aspect of the sign event, the prophetic element, which was initially the most striking. Mennonites seem to allow money and music to control the direction of the church. Our churches run their programs and organizations in a secular, business-like manner. The structures of the world are imposed on the structures of the church, but too often they do not fit. The result is a loss of respect for people as part of the community of faith and an increased respect for business-like procedures. The church should not run its business irresponsibly, but we must consider more than money in our decision making. The warning to us in this sign lies in our attitude toward our financial resources—will we control them or will they control us?

The warning in the music sign comes from our heritage of music making. We can easily let our ethnic traditions close us to other expressions of faith and praise of God. The sign warns us not to let our past expressions of music making shut out people among us with a different heritage and thereby limit our future expressions of gratitude and praise to God.

Will we allow "Mennonites: Money and Music" to be a sign event? Is it truly where we have been, where we are now and where we are going?

O MONTHS TO
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MENNONITE

NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST

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Mennonites have much to share with Hisp

Who are the Hispanics?

Alberto Quintela, Jr.

The Hispanic population in North America is a nation within nations. The 1973 census figures indicated 9,072,602 people of Spanish origin, constituting the second largest minority group in the United States at 4.4 percent of the total population. The U.S. Census Bureau reported 4.5 million children under 20 years of age spoke Spanish at home and were in need of special language programs for integration into the larger society. Compared with the median number of 12.0 school years completed for whites, the median was 8.1 for Mexican Americans and 8.6 for Puerto Ricans. In 1970 about one-third to one-half of the Mexican Americans in the southwestern United States lived below the official poverty level. Most were manual workers earning minimal wages.

In some ways little has changed. The Hispanic population is still the second fastest growing minority group in the United States. In addition to the 12 million Hispanics identified by the Census Bureau, it is estimated that another 10-12 million undocumented Hispanics reside there. Along the Mexican-U.S. border, the Rio Grande is merely an inconvenience, and thousands of Mexicans enter the country each month.

The recent influx of Latin American refugees will change the complexion of the Hispanic population—which had been predominantly Mexican-American with fewer Puerto Ricans. Besides 61,000 Salvadorans legally, it is estimated that 300-500,000 undocumented Salvadorans reside in the United States. Large numbers of Salvadorans and Guatemalan refugees reside in Spanish enclaves in Montreal and Ontario.

As Mennonites embark on an evangelistic outreach to carry Anabaptist principles into every home in the United States and Canada, a decision must be made whether to ignore or to reach out to this significant Hispanic portion of that population.

To help us make careful decisions, I present an overview of the Hispanic population with some lay observations on aspects of its culture. For a more scientific analysis, reference to anthropological and sociological authority is recommended. The following observations can serve as initial guideposts but are presented with knowledge of the inherent dangers in making generalizations.

Hispanics are a varied and multifaceted group. There are significant regional, historical, political and socioeconomic factors which result in a multitude of living patterns. There are Hispanics who are poor, an emerging number who are middle-class and a few who are wealthy. Spanish is the exclusive language in some homes, some families are bilingual, and in some homes Spanish is never spoken.

Some Hispanics trace their ancestry to their Spanish forebears, and others trace their ancestry back to indigenous Latin American Indian populations. Some Hispanics are recent immigrants to the United States and Canada, while others are fourth and fifth generations whose families were living in fabulous haciendas long before the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth Rock.

Hispanics vary in degrees to which they have integrated or assimilated into the dominant culture. To the degree that Hispanics have retained their cultural traditions and norms, Mennonite outreach must strive to be neither prejudicial nor condescending. Groups of people think and act differently, and to ignore that or to strive to impose Mennonite or other cultural norms is to deprive ourselves of useful knowledge and the Hispanics of cultural dignity. This was never intended by Christ in his directive to reach out to all nations.

Differences in communication styles and in other areas may exist between Mennonites and Hispanics. What may seem cool, crisp and efficient to Mennonites may appear rude, disrespectful and blunt to Hispanics. The traditional Latin approach dictates diplomacy and tact, with a concern and respect for others' feelings that always permits a gracious retreat. Hispanics may seek to avoid direct argument or contradiction, which to them may seem disrespectful.

While appearing dissimilar on the surface, the above cultural dichotomy may actually be one of two similar characteristics between Mennonites and Hispanics. The Mennonite tradition of decision making through the consensus process strives to take into account the feelings of others, much like the Hispanic culture.

Like Mennonites, the family is a central focus for Hispanics. Hispanics at any large gathering will seek to determine as quickly as possible how many people in the room they may be related to, if only remotely, thus establishing the fundamental family connection. Hispanics exhibit strong familial tendencies, sharing material possessions and food with members of the extended fam-

cs, and Hispanics have much to share with Mennonites.

ily even when there may be precious little to meet their own needs. The father tends to be the dominant figure, and Hispanics, like Mennonites, emphasize respect and obedience to elders.

Children are taught to share, cooperate and work together for the good of the family. Mennonites have taken the concept of family and—much like the Hispanics—extended that into a larger community concept in which members have worked and shared cooperatively to achieve progress and prosperity.

Two areas of dissimilarity between Mennonites and Hispanics may be in the aspects of time orientation and work attitudes. To Mennonites, time may be money, according a high importance to punctuality. To Hispanics from the lower socioeconomic segments, a time orientation to the here and now may result from immediate survival needs and from lack of realistic upward mobility due to lack of opportunity for education, employment or advancement.

Steeped in the Puritan tradition, Mennonites may view work as responsible action leading to tangible rewards. In contrast, Hispanics view work as essential for survival but not an end in itself. To Hispanics, life is to be enjoyed through emotional experiences resulting in satisfying relationships rather than through past accomplishment and accumulation of wealth.

This brief overview of the interplay between Hispanic and Mennonite lifestyles cannot begin to do justice to the richness and depth of the history, values and traditions of either people. Hopefully it becomes a motivation to seek further awareness of our ethnic neighbors. Mennonites have much to share with Hispanics, and Hispanics have much to share with Mennonites.

The true kingdom of God is composed of various ethnic groups, communities and languages who join their voices in one prayer of worship. As in an orchestra, each instrument with its characteristic timbre and theme contributes distinct and recognizable parts to the composition.

The Hispanic population is a significant segment in the U.S. and Canadian orchestra. In some communities, Hispanics have established Spanish language radio and TV stations, newspapers and periodicals. Mexican food is fast becoming a part of Canadian and U.S. cuisine. Spanish words like "ranch" and "lariat" have become a part of the English vocabulary. Spanish names identify numerous towns, roads and buildings in the southwestern United States.

Hispanics are a growing part of the Mennonite community. Of the 1,909 Mennonite churches in the United States and Canada, 55 are Hispanic. Hispanics are attracted to Mennonite churches which stress Bible study, personal salvation, and loyalty to family and community. For most Hispanics, joining the Mennonite church is like joining a family. Personally I have joined the Janzen family.

Specific issues in evangelistic outreach to Hispanics. A threshold question is whether such outreach must be accompanied by Spanish Bibles, hymnals and other materials.

Mennonites have taken the concept of family and—much like the Hispanics—extended that into a larger community concept in which members have worked and shared cooperatively. . . .

Draft and military issues are also prevalent among a U.S. Hispanic population that is roughly six to seven years younger than their non-Hispanic counterparts. Over 40 percent of the U.S. Hispanic population is under 18 years old. The median age of U.S. Hispanics is 22.1. Military enlistment may appear to be the only viable alternative to a Hispanic youth with limited options for upward mobility. With the jobless rate among Hispanic youth at 30 percent, the offers of career, education and travel opportunities entice many to enroll in the armed forces. Efforts must be undertaken to not only present the way of peace and conscientious objection to these youth but to create educational and occupational opportunities.

Spiritual outreach must also be accompanied by attending to the physical needs of portions of the Hispanic population. Thousands of Latin American refugees are at our doors pleading for help. Many have fled incredible poverty and repressive political situations. Until there is a change from the U.S. death deportation policy, U.S. and Canadian Mennonite churches should succor and transport these refugees to Canada—the only North American country that has opened its doors to them. Resettlement support—long a Mennonite tradition—although costly and extensive, must be provided to these our earthly brothers and sisters. Legal and housing services, citizenship and language classes, clothing, food, health and child-care needs are but several of the services that may be necessary.

Who are the Hispanics? Who are the Mennonites? How do we do evangelistic outreach to the Hispanics? Answers are not simple. Mennonites and Hispanics must strive to build bridges between their ways of living. Mennonite evangelistic outreach to Hispanics must be undertaken with a sincere respect and appreciation for the Hispanic culture. Anglo and German Mennonites should join Hispanic Mennonites in lively hymn singing that may be accompanied by handclapping and guitars. Hispanics are a friendly and outgoing people who will enrich Mennonites with lively music and expressions; a sense of emotional expression and a deep appreciation for life. Mennonites can provide guidance to Hispanics on community self-help and self-sufficiency. We can enjoy each other as we together build the kingdom of God. •

Is ‘peace tax’ just a div

Robert Hull

An argument by some war tax resisters is that any peace tax fund is a means for conscientious objectors to salve their conscience with regard to diverting their own taxes, and that this provision then will encourage such COs to be quiet and passively accept the warmaking of governments which will continue more efficiently without their dissent.

When I have explored this argument, I almost invariably discover that the war tax resister speaking is drawing upon an analogy made with the 20th-century U.S./Canadian history of conscientious objection to military service.

The Civilian Public Service camps of World War II by and large had this “quietistic” effect. However, it should be noted that the provision for COs in World War II came about because the government remembered the difficulties it had encountered with historic peace church resisters in World War I. Similar spokespersons on the eve of World War II stated their convictions to “draw the line” again if acceptable provisions were not made.

But even during World War II, the legal criteria for CO classification in the United States were broadened by the Supreme Court to include all religious objectors, then during the Vietnam War to include people holding a belief equivalent to that in a Supreme Being (*Seeger*, 1965), and later to all people morally, ethically or religiously opposed to all war (*Welsh*, 1970). In the draft registration debate in 1980-81, projections by the Selective Service of future CO claimants extended to 40 percent of all registrants.

It seems reasonable to conclude that at least one cause for this large increase in the potential CO population is a result of the public visibility of thousands of young men performing alternative service during the Vietnam War.

The recent response of the U.S. Selective Service to its own projections has been to develop plans for CO alternative service which seek to once more “contain” the CO visibility by centralizing the program under direct Selective Service administration in order to meet military mobilization priorities. This policy is in turn quite likely to produce non-cooperators who will have registered but then find that such an alternative service program is unacceptable to their conscience. A significant number of such non-cooperators would increase the already more than 500,000 draft-

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ersion of energies?

eligible young men who have not registered.

Twentieth-century CO history has lodged anomalous laws within the government structures. That is, if these laws are interpreted by relatively tolerant regulations, the CO population may grow uncontrollably large; if the laws are interpreted by repressive regulations, the number of non-cooperators may grow uncontrollably.

Now let's pursue this analogy with regard to peace tax legislation and war tax resistance. I am convinced that Parliament or Congress will never enact peace tax legislation until the war tax resistance movement grows so large that such laws come to be viewed as an expedient accommodation, as Civilian Public Service was viewed on the eve of World War II.

But several differences between the two are significant. Bear in mind that peace tax legislation provides for the taxpayer to claim he or she is a CO and that the burden of the challenge and rebuttal lies upon the government. Additionally, peace tax legislation's provision for income tax forms and information materials to describe the military proportion of the federal budget in some detail will ensure that a far greater percentage of the taxpayers become aware of the peace tax alternative than the percentage of draft-age men who were made aware by the government of the CO alternative from World War II through Vietnam. Finally, the peace tax legislation provides for the diversion of CO taxpayers' "military taxes" into a trust fund. This is intended to result in a direct drain out of the general treasury available for war preparations.

Thus the peace tax legislation further raises people's consciousness. If peace trust funds in the United States and Canada are administered as the legislation intends, many millions of people will choose to support peacemaking alternatives to conflict rather than supporting warmaking preparations, and a "democracy of defense" may develop: those who rely on military weapons can pay for them without coercing the contributions of those who place their reliance upon other alternatives.

If the CO eligibility criteria are interpreted too restrictively, or inaccurate portrayals of the military proportion of the federal budget are published, or CO taxpayers' funds are demonstrably rechanneled into the warmaking treasury, then increased numbers of informed citizens may respond with direct tax resistance.

A technician stands at the bottom of an MX missile testing cell in Tullahoma, Tenn. The MX will absorb billions of dollars from U.S. taxpayers.

The government will thus have on its hands another significant anomalous law, one by which millions of citizens can measure the government's tendency to override their democratic rights in its clearing of the path toward war.

This then is the educational strategy behind the peace tax effort as I see it. The legislation will reach millions of people with the message that there are alternatives to paying for the war system. It will provide a step which millions of citizens can take, and whose aggregate pressure for peacemaking will be enormous, without overwhelming risk to the individual taxpayer. After all, it is at least in part the risk involved in war tax refusal which keeps it an infinitesimally small protest movement in the total population.

I hope that thousands of active peacemakers will heed the call to war tax refusal and that the pressure for peace upon the warmaking tendencies of government will grow. As it does, I believe it will prove disastrous if the peacemaking community has no legislative proposal to put forward which will secure as much of the "democracy of defense" goal as possible, and to which the government can turn as an accommodation. •

Visions become realities

The Vision and the Reality: The Story of Home Missions in the General Conference Mennonite Church, *by Lois Barrett (Faith and Life Press, 1983, 339 pages)*

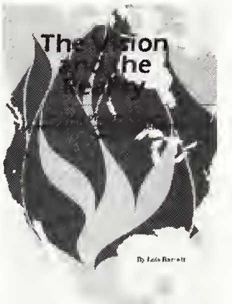
Introduced by David Habegger, CHM secretary for congregational life, 2457 Perry, Wichita, KS 67204

It has been said a church lives by mission as a fire lives by burning. For the General Conference Mennonite Church, home missions has been a vital part of its life. Doing mission work was one of the main purposes outlined for its existence when the conference began in 1860. And mission work—home and foreign—has taken a significant amount of energy, human resources and money in our 120 years. Thus it was important that an account of home mission work be written. Jim Juhnke's *A People of Mission* earlier told our foreign mission story.

How our home mission work began is interesting. There were first the efforts to follow families who left the larger settlements so new congregations might be established. Such people as Daniel Hege, John B. Baer, H. H. Ewert and David Goerz are highlighted along with many others. Then the work among the Arapaho and Cheyenne in Oklahoma, the Hopi in Arizona and the Cheyenne in Montana was initiated in 1880. Here we read of such pioneers as Samuel and Susanna Hirschler Haury, Rodolphe and Maria Gerber Petter, and Gustav A. and Anna Hirschler Linscheid. These were people with great dedication and sincere faith, for they served faithfully under many difficult circumstances.

The story moves on to recount how work was started in such major urban centers as Los Angeles and Chicago, and in smaller towns such as Altoona, Smith Corner and Roaring Springs, Pa.

The development of voluntary service programs in both the United States and Canada is traced. Preceding the VS program, which did not get started until 1946, was the deaconess movement and a variety of service opportunities in connection with the various home mission programs. The first three deaconesses were Frieda Kaufman, Catherine Voth and Ida Epp, who were ordained and installed in 1908.



The story of home mission work in the General Conference is much more than a recounting of names and dates. Both the *vision* by which the church and its leaders sought to do mission work and the *reality* of what transpired are carefully examined, as are the sources of the vision and the conflicts created as people with varying theological presuppositions planned and worked together.

Lois Barrett, the author, is a first-generation Mennonite and brings a helpful perspective to the work that has to a large part been directed toward non-Mennonites. She begins the final chapter, "The history of home missions in the General Conference is a history of the changing definition of what it means to be a Mennonite."

As we look into the future we need to be aware of the forces that have shaped our work. The more clearly we make decisions on the basis of an enlightened vision the better able we will be to bring about a reality that will be a credit to the faith we profess. The chapter on the results of our work among the Native Americans is entitled "A Small Harvest." The reality of what was accomplished is painful to read at times because of the limited vision that undergirded the work. As a son of parents who gave 40 years of their lives to that mission, I along with my parents wish the work had been based on better understandings. More than once my mother said, "We made many mistakes, and if we could do it over again we would do it differently."

C. J. Dyck, in the foreword, calls the story a dramatic one. Even though it is a sobering story of mistakes and prejudices, personality conflicts and failure, "it is also a story of significant achievements, sacrificial giving of time and talent, grace and faithfulness. Many people dreamed many dreams, and a good number of them came true." Those who have gone before us in the work would want us to learn from both their successes and failures, and we owe Barrett appreciation for her efforts to give us an understanding of all that has been tried and experienced.

Montana natives John Standsintimber, Oliver Risingsun and Stamper White in 1961

How is our contemporary leaven?

David Trembley

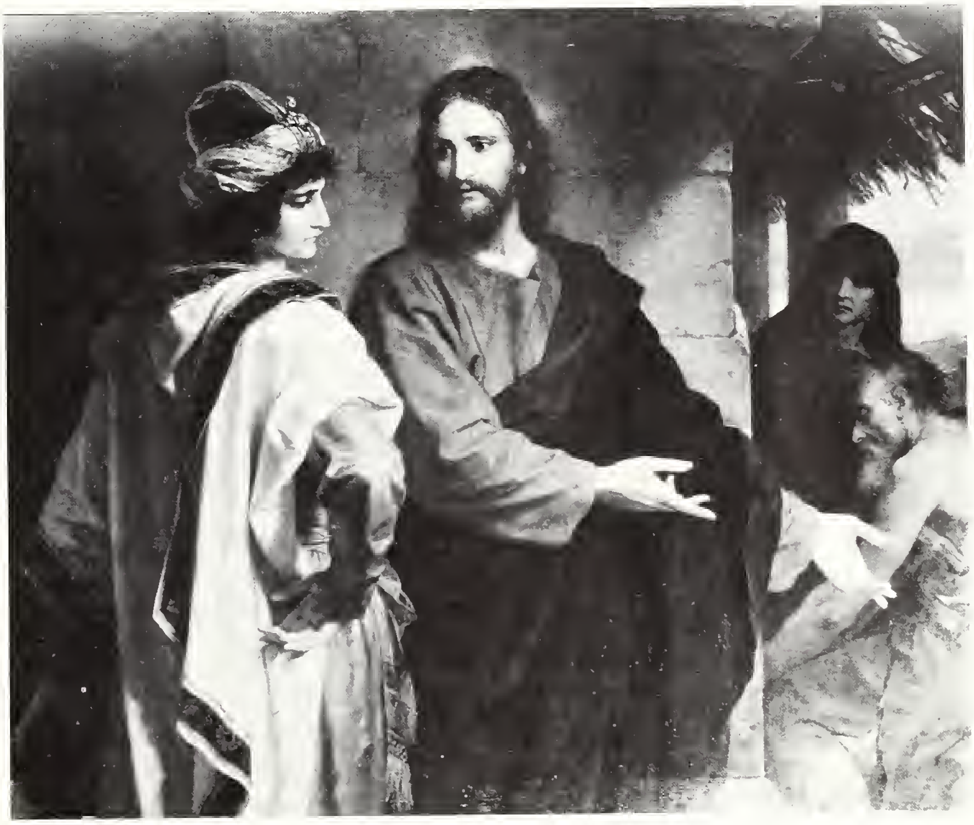
You know very well this verse which has been swirling around inside me for weeks. I just can't get it out of my mind. Matthew 16:6: " 'Beware,' Jesus said. 'Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees.' "

What do you think he was talking about? Wouldn't it be wonderful if we could be quite sure exactly what their wrongness was? If we could only be certain, we could avoid that evil. And then what? Why, we should be justified, of course. We would have a legitimate claim upon the mercy, forgiveness and power of God.

Which is, of course, the very thing that the leaven of the Pharisees was . . . and is. It's not a doctrinal position Jesus doesn't agree with; it's a condition of the heart, characterized by wanting to be sure rather than daring to trust. Make no mistake about it; for Jesus Christ, trust beats out knowledge every time. The faith of a child is what he celebrated and approved. Innocence and humility were qualities he valued above wisdom and pride.

The temptation of sin is to leap to the opposite wrongness. The temptation is to say something foolish like, "It doesn't matter *what* you believe; only *that* you believe." We might counter that foolishness by arguing about it. We might remind each other that Jesus counseled the wisdom of serpents (as well as the innocence of doves) and that he said he had come to fulfill the law (rather than to destroy it). We might argue about it, but perhaps there's a more Christlike way to combat the foolishness of spiritual "no-nothingism."

Consider what the antinomians are attempting to accomplish with their claim that right doctrine doesn't matter. Are they not, at the deepest levels, guilty of precisely the same desire as the Pharisees in the New Testament? Are they not seeking to create a moral environment in which they will be shielded from the judgment of God? If truth is only discernible by means of an individual's feelings, then any one person can be the "final judge" of his or her own righteousness. The circle turns one entire round. Both the legalist and the antinomian are guilty of precisely the same thing. Both want to do away with the necessity of trusting God for salvation and to put something "more solid and trustworthy" in the place of that need to trust. For the Pharisee, the solid something is rule and law and doctrine. For the antinomian, it's the fuzzy gray of personal opinion. For both, it winds up being a denial of the sovereignty of God (and of the inevitable imperative for each person to rest upon that sovereignty *in faith*, rather than in thought or feeling).



Heinrich Hofman's "Christ and the Rich Young Ruler": Go, sell everything. . . .

For most of us who call ourselves Christians, it would be quite nice to stop here. "Oh yes," we want to say, "those sinful old Pharisees; those poor, misguided enthusiasts." The hard truth, however, is that often we more resemble the Pharisees than we do the faithful. Faithfulness is gift rather than accomplishment, but most of us talk about our religious convictions as something we have worked for and achieved. Even if we don't talk that way, all too often it is the position we hold deep in the secret places of our hearts. The truth for most of us is that we are more attached to right doctrine than we are in danger of the pitfalls of enthusiasm.

Consider these things the next time you're tempted to cite a religious rule. Do you have an ironclad opinion about communion or baptism or church attendance or any other particular practice? Before you lay down the law to your brother or sister, consider Jesus at table with the tax collector, forgiving the adulterous woman and telling the rich young ruler that only one more thing is required: "to go sell everything you have, and to come and follow me."

Obedience includes right thinking, right feeling and right doing. But it is more than all three of these put together. It is, finally, a gift. The only appropriate response for any of us is to fall on our faces in praise. Then to get up, *because the Holy Spirit empowers us*, and set off to do the business of the Lord.

Do-it-yourself missions is okay

Stan Bohn

Maybe the author of *Megatrends* had observed some GC congregations when he wrote, "We are shifting from institutional help to more self-reliance in all aspects of our lives. . . . We are giving up our dependence on hierarchical structures in favor of informal networks." More congregations are getting into larger mission projects rather than depending on the conference to give them ideas of mission needs.

It's not new for congregations or church members to come up with their own mission efforts. Earlier there were the building of retirement homes, MDS, the Agri-Urban cattle raising project and requests for MVS units to work in local ministries. Congregations were doing jail visitation and taking ministry efforts to other institutions. Churches like Hamilton, Ont., Markham, Ill., Dallas and others seemed involved in major local ministries from their beginnings. Today that tendency is expanding.

Congregations are helping sponsor local interdenominational peace conferences and establish peace centers—once seen as a denominational task. It's not hard to find congregations offering a full vacation Bible school program to a congregation in need of help (in addition to their own), launching Bible study groups for outreach, sponsoring daughter congregations, assisting with housing projects for low-income people, sponsoring refugee resettlement, taking on offender work, doing food distribution and even setting up lay seminary programs as in southeast Iowa and southeast Pennsylvania. At least one congregation has a group focusing on needs in Central America with members making visits to those countries. Several groups have sponsored missionaries who are chosen and placed, but then contact COM or CHM about including their work in the wider conference programs.

Such efforts make the local church more like a mini mission board than a church simply sending money for work done by others. Often staff are employed to carry out the local outreach, and grants or special funds are sought in the same way mission boards do this. Conference staff may find themselves asked for participation in a local project before they can request congregational support in conference work.

Not all local mission projects are initiated locally; some are started by a conference and then adopted by a congregation for special support and two-way visits with the groups they are helping. Rural congregations tend to pick projects more distant, while urban congregations often find great needs on their doorsteps.

It may be that members who had left home for alternative service and VS assignments came home convinced that the kind of evangelism or ministries they had done in Chicago or elsewhere could also be done at home.

What are the implications? (1) The Commission on Home Ministries finds that congregations heavily involved in their own mission want a different kind of missionary talk from us—less about how they can help conference work elsewhere and more about conference work that relates to what they are doing, including the discoveries about how best to carry it out.

2. It becomes more helpful for local congregations to visit CHM mission work and report back to their own congregations—a do-it-yourself mission festival speaker—than for CHM missionaries or MVS workers to visit them. Congregational representatives who visit mission locations see what seem to be ordinary people doing ordinary work of the kind that inspires responses such as, "We could do that." When a visiting speaker comes from the same project, he or she seems like a specialist doing things that inspire responses such as, "I'm glad there are a few people who can do such wonderful things."

If a speaker inspires a feeling of helpless appreciation while a visit to a project inspires the courage to move ahead, we hope there will be more visits—as long as MVS units and other mission work don't get swamped with tourists who want to be entertained.

3. CHM is busier than ever. It takes extra staff time to help an Anglo congregation relate to a new Hispanic one, or to help arrange the visit of a youth group to an MVS unit, or to give instructions so that a church can send a member on a visit to gather information in order to be a mission festival speaker.

If visits to mission projects inspire more congregations with courage to move ahead in local mission, let there be more visits.

Bookkeeping is also more complicated because a specific mission project adopted by one congregation may occasionally already be funded by designated gifts. We now must ask permission to use the contribution in some unfunded project.

Congregations involved in their own evangelism projects are concerned about the hazards of paternalism or encouraging dependency. Often they want to discuss with CHM staff how to give their

The Dallas Mennonite Fellowship in a Sunday morning goal-setting session

help so that the group they are helping will be strengthened. That takes both them and us more time than it took to send us the money to route on to a mission worker.

We are also taking more time to put congregations doing similar work in touch with each other and writing up mission experiences of various congregations to pass on their learnings to others.

4. It looks as if some of the newer language congregations will have better ties with some of the more established congregations than ever before. It is less likely that some representatives of an Asian Mennonite group in Toronto will go to a provincial or national conference and find people who wonder why they are there. They will have had enough contacts in visiting back and forth that people will actually be expecting them. That too is different than when only the CHM staff or mission committee personnel made visits.

One Mennonite congregation in Kansas has sent a banner and a letter to a Chinese Mennonite congregation that it tries to keep up with and support in a special way. Another group installed a temporary phone in the pulpit one Sunday morning and put a phone call through to a congregation that was part of their Sunday morning mission sharing.

On the whole, the new do-it-yourself approach seems better. One church member in Dallas reported on the meaningfulness for a congregation to be involved in Christ's mission themselves rather than to be doing "mission by proxy."

So CHM eagerly anticipates some shifting roles in being mission partners with congregations in a new way. There seems to be some new excitement, and though CHM and the congregations can't always help each other as much as they like, the wider experience of having to clarify our faith and share it ourselves seems better for us all.

Several local congregations have become deeply involved in ministry to Asian refugees who have come to live among them.

The small church is beautiful

David Habegger

Small churches—those with an attendance of 75 or less—have unique characteristics, unique strengths and unique problems. A recent book by Lyle Schaller has the title *The Small Church Is Different.*

What is a small church? Numbers alone are not a determining factor. A congregation's view of itself probably gives the best definition. Those churches that have struggled to keep a program going, have experienced a decline in numbers because members of the families have moved away or even entire families have left, and those having a difficult time keeping up with the expenses generally consider themselves small. Such churches frequently have a sense of inadequacy—of being marginal—and they are often discouraged.

A more positive view of small churches comes into focus when we note some of their desirable characteristics. They have the ability to endure in spite of setbacks, they provide meaningful commitment to the group, and usually they have a much higher percentage of their members participating in the life of the church than do "large" congregations.

The Commission on Home Ministries is developing ways of assisting small congregations to look at their strengths and to develop them so they can continue to have a dynamic life even though they are frequently in areas of declining population. A conference for these churches was held May 6-7 in the Lehigh Mennonite Church, Lehigh, Kan. This meeting was planned in cooperation with people from the Mennonite Church, Mennonite Brethren and the Church of the Brethren. Over 30 congregations with an average Sunday worship attendance of less than 65 people were invited to participate.

Small churches have the ability to endure in spite of setbacks, they provide meaningful commitment to the group, and usually they have a much higher percentage of their members actively participating in the life of the church than do large churches.

The pastors and members of the small churches considered how they could be more effective in their goal setting, in developing intergenerational Christian education and in developing leadership for their needs. Interest groups on the topics of youth, music, evangelism, administration and the potential of bivocational pastors were part of the program.

Conferences and small churches interested in having an emphasis on the unique values of small churches may write: Secretary for Congregational Life, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.

The Summerfield (Ill.) Mennonite Church decided in January to sell its building. On May 15 the church held a farewell ceremony to mark the sale of the building in which the church has met for the past 73 years. Summerfield is one of the three congregations which participated in the formation of the General Conference Mennonite Church. The farewell ceremony was attended by 14 members and friends of the congregation, including two members who were present at the original dedication service for the building. The service included ringing the church bell 124 times to symbolize the congregation's time in church buildings, singing one of the hymns sung at the original dedication service, and signing a document marking the retirement of the building. The Summerfield congregation will continue meeting as a house church with the ongoing leadership of George and Helene Dick. Members include a nursing instructor, elementary school teacher, home-care worker, a semiretired farmer and several retired people. One non-attending member is a 108-year-old woman. Three church women care for her. Numerous items in the church building will be donated to various Mennonite churches and museums for use and preservation.

NEWS

Guatemalan Mennonites reach out to poor

Guatemala City, Guatemala (MCC)—On April 17, Guatemalan Mennonites dedicated their newly opened social service center. The center contains offices for the Permanent Social Service Committee, which coordinates several congregational service committees formed to help the poor in their own low-income communities.

Unemployment in Guatemala City is at least 25 percent and underemployment is even higher. The majority of Guatemalan families earn less than $60 a month and are finding survival increasingly difficult. Economic decline and continued migration from the countryside to slums encircling Guatemala City were exacerbated by earlier army-opposition fighting and more recently by army clean-up operations.

In 1982 the first program of the social service committee was initiated, a credit program for housing improvement and small businesses. MCC country representative Richard Sider of Lancaster, Pa., reports that about 50 families were able to improve their housing or increase their income through these small loans. MCC supplied the funds for the initial capital to be used as a revolving fund. Sider reports that over one-fourth of the original loan money has been paid back within a year. The program strengthened the relationship between Mennonite churches and MCC and has provided the opportunity for Mennonites to serve their neighbors in need.

Carlos Mejia (left) and Rich Sider at the Social Service Center's dedication

Presently the committee is setting up food-buying cooperatives to allow participants to purchase basic foodstuffs at near wholesale prices. Most families have little cash and must purchase small quantities of beans, rice and other necessities at marked-up prices. Hopefully these food co-ops, which will buy in quantity and then repackage in amounts affordable by the poor, will bring down food prices for those who join. MCC worker Ken Eckstrom from Tucson, Ariz., and Carlos Mejía, a local Guatemalan Mennonite, supervise the project.

The service committee sees health care as a major need in its communities. Government clinics, which recently experienced drastic government cutbacks, either do not exist in the slums where the poor live or offer such inadequate service that the poor do not bother going there. MCC nurse Annalies Schier from Holland, recently arrived in Guatemala, will be setting up clinics under the direction of the service committees. A Guatemalan doctor will be working with Schier.

Unemployment is a growing problem. The service committee is working on matching the unemployed with available jobs. The committee also hopes to establish a job creation center for seamstresses and promote an appropriate technology training center in Guatemala City.

Members of the Mennonite Church Service Committee challenge fellow church members on their responsibility to minister to one another, both within the Christian community and within their larger communities.

As convicted murderer John Evans climbed into Alabama's electric chair April 29, he flashed a peaceful smile to Martin Weber, chaplain of Holman Prison in Atmore, Ala. Weber is an ordained pastor in the Mennonite Church. "Don't worry about me," Evans had told Weber minutes earlier. "I know where I'm going." Having turned to Christianity more than three years earlier, Evans said nothing about it until just before his execution. He recorded the testimony of his spiritual salvation on tape and gave it to Weber to release after his death, sensing it would have greater integrity and power if handled this way.

In response to urging and counsel from the churches, Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Ind., is taking steps to improve the communication skills of students in preaching and speaking. Beginning this fall, all students will be given an hour-long communication screening to test their level of speaking skill. Class work and tutoring will be recommended in Basic Communications, Preaching I or Preaching II. A new faculty member in preaching is being sought; the position is to begin in fall 1984.

While women represent half the world's population and account for one-third of its labor force, they earn only one-10th of world income and own less than one-100th of its property, according to a recent report by the United Nations Ad Hoc Group on Equal Rights for Women.

Vietnamese delegation makes 'friendship visit' to MCC (Canada)

Winnipeg (MCC Canada)—On May 2 a four-member delegation from Vietnam, members of the Solidarity Friendship Committee, visited Mennonite Central Committee (Canada) offices here.

Mr. Do Xuan Oanh, leader of the delegation, expressed gratitude to MCC for arranging the trip and for material aid assistance to their country from 1975-1981. "Food is not our only problem," he said. He indicated that they would require decades, even a century, to achieve Canada's level of economy and stability.

The purpose of the two-week visit was to provide an opportunity for deeper understanding of the situation and concerns of the Vietnamese. While some of the questions and issues related to governmental policy, the visit was not designed to deal with these primarily. Most of their time in Canada was spent with Mennonite people and institutions and with representatives of other churches and organizations.

Since 1975 MCC has sent seven delegations to Vietnam in an effort to maintain the relationship established earlier. MCC hoped, through continued involvement, to remain in communication with the Christian church there. The visits also helped MCC respond to relief and development needs, as well as to monitor the end use of food and material aid shipments.

Since 1975 MCC has contributed approximately $2 million of aid to Vietnam. This was comprised of medical supplies, irrigation pumps, rototillers, wheat flour and various material aid like soap, vegetable seeds, milk powder and clothing.

This visit by the four delegates was to reciprocate for the times when they hosted MCC delegations and permitted them to learn about Vietnam and its people.

On the issue of Vietnamese involvement in Kampuchea, MCC executives were told that Vietnam sees it as its responsibility to maintain order in that country. All troops will be withdrawn as soon as Kampuchea is deemed able to defend itself and to provide stability for its people. Reference was made to the atrocities committed by the Pol Pot regime and that Vietnam could not stand by and allow the genocidal activities to continue.

According to the delegation, the Evangelical Church in Vietnam "has freedom of religion, conscience and activities as long as they do not interfere with other things in society." Oanh, however, admitted that he could not speak for the church. The government has assisted in rebuilding churches, and many young people attend, he said.

The discussions on May 2 also touched on the reasons for the "boat people" fleeing Vietnam. Many things were against them, suggested the spokesperson—the monsoons, sea piracy, but basically they were 'economic' refugees in contrast to 'political' refugees. "They could not wait for better times to come to our country."

Oanh further described the severe economic conditions after the Saigon "liberation," when there was only five days' supply of food in the country and the United States curtailed all food aid. Floods and other natural disasters further caused deterioration in their economy. Only in the last two years has the situation improved slightly. The delegation repeatedly expressed gratitude to Mennonite Central Committee and to the Mennonite people for their assistance. "We need more than food," they said, "and MCC deals with all aspects—health, education, agriculture." *Martha Janzen*

At MCC (Canada) headquarters: (left to right) Tran Minh Quoc (teacher), Do Xuan Oanh (journalist), J. M. Klassen (MCC executive), Nguyen Thi Ngoc Phuong (medical doctor), Nguyen Nhu Kim (physicist)

Women from five Niverville, Man., area churches produced 3,600 lbs. of soap during the latter part of April during the spring soapmaking bee. The soap was donated to Mennonite Central Committee for shipment to countries such as Zaire, India and Brazil. During the spring and fall bees last year the Niverville group produced 8,100 lbs. of soap destined for overseas countries.

Part of the Niverville soapmaking crew packing the finished soap for shipment

A full roster of 4,000 official participants might have meant that visitors would be turned away from the Sixth Assembly of the World Council of Churches when it convenes at Vancouver this summer. But a special ecumenical forum in neighboring Washington state will give an additional 1,000 people a chance to participate in the once-in-a-decade gathering of the world church. The Bellingham Forum will meet on the campus of Western Washington University in Bellingham, Wash., from July 23-Aug. 1, the first week of the WCC Assembly.

AIMM makes policy, personnel decisions at semiannual meetings

Freeman, S.D. (AIMM)—Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission's semiannual board meetings were held here April 28-May 1. Area churches, representing three of the five Mennonite groups that constitute AIMM, hosted nearly three dozen board members, mission staff, missionaries on furlough and candidates for service. A special guest was pastor Mundeke Kalawu representing Mennonite churches in Zaire.

Arrangements made through the Mennonite Ministerium enabled AIMM personnel to share in 15 congregations on Sunday morning in the Freeman, Marion, Bridgewater and Sioux Falls communities. Churches of the Evangelical Mennonite Brethren, the General Conference and Mennonite Brethren were involved.

Business sessions were held at the Bethany Mennonite Church in Freeman. Board members grappled with substantive issues as well as receiving reports and interviewing candidates. Policy statements on decision making in crisis situations, procedures in the event of death overseas, guidelines for income earned through assignments and policy concerning loss of personal properties on the field were approved. Attempts to bring equity in financial structures and support levels between the vastly differing economies in the countries in which AIMM works received a great deal of attention.

Reports shared by Zaire mission workers Peter and Gladys Buller and Mary Epp focused on the needs of leadership training at several academic levels. The Bullers are on staff at the theological institute in Kinshasa known as I.S.T.K. Epp is a staff person of the Bible institute at Kalonda. Their reports were coupled with a moving plea to give highest priority to adequate leadership training at all levels for the strengthening of the rapidly growing Zaire church.

Six candidates were approved for Africa ministry. Gary and Maureen Groot of Saskatoon will join the medical staff at Kalonda. Sandra Friesen of Steinbach, Man., was approved for teaching at the Kalonda Bible Institute following language study in France. David Bergen of Herbert, Sask., will serve in Kinshasa, sponsored by the General Conference's overseas mission volunteer program. Harlan and Claire de Brun, from Waldoboro, Maine, will go to Lesotho in southern Africa to minister with African Independent Churches in a Bible teaching program. An additional appointment was made as Elda Hiebert of Elbing, Kan., was reassigned to Zaire after an absence of five years. She will work in the maternity hospital at Nyanga.

Elected as officers of the Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission at the Freeman meetings were Andrew Rupp, Fort Wayne, Ind., president; Peter Sawatzky, Waterloo, Ont., vice president; and Erwin Rempel, Newton, Kan., secretary. James Bertsche continues as executive secretary. *Bob Gerhart*

Zairian pastor calls for continued church partnership

Freeman, S.D. (AIMM)—"You cannot say, 'We have done enough and they can now work on their own.' The Bible does not say that. Man needs a fellow to work with him."

So shared Zairian pastor Mundeke Kalawu at the board sessions of Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission. A member of the Evangelical Mennonite Church of Zaire, the 38-year-old church leader expressed "great thanks for those who brought the Bible and the gospel to Zaire."

But he went on to plead for continued partnership and the need for missionary personnel to work with the expanding church.

Mundeke reported, "The church is constantly growing day by day. In terms of faith it is enlarging itself. We have proof that God's hand is upon the church in Zaire, but we have many problems too."

After six weeks of travel among Mennonite communities in the United States, Mundeke contrasted the American access to travel with limitations in his nation. "In Zaire," he explained, "the difficulty of communication and transport seriously hinders the work of evangelism. For you here it is easy."

Born in Tshikapa, Mundeke grew up at Djoko Punda along the Kasai River of south central Zaire. In the tribal strife and relocations of 1960, his parents moved more than 300 miles to Mbuji Mayi in the province of East Kasai. Mundeke attended school in Kinshasa while tensions were high but was able to complete his secondary education at Mbuji Mayi. He enrolled in the Institute for Higher Theological Training in Kinshasa in 1973, graduating in 1977. He returned with his wife to Mbuji Mayi, where he taught Bible in a secondary school and served as headmaster of a girl's school before being elected to administrative responsibilities of the 4,000-member Community of Evangelical Mennonites.

In the Sunday evening mission rally on May 1, marking the close of the AIMM board meetings, Mundeke brought greetings and expressions of gratitude from the Mennonite Christians of Zaire.

He concluded with the plea, "Pray hard for us. Pray very hard for us, until Jesus returns, for the work that is to be done."

On April 18, Mary Sprunger-Froese and Pat McCormick were tried, found guilty of trespass and given $500 fines, suspended on the condition that they not break the law for two years, as a result of their Ash Wednesday prayer at Rocky Flats Nuclear Weapons Plant near Denver (see *The Mennonite*, March 29 issue, p. 158). Sprunger-Froese expressed gratitude that they were allowed to say to the jury all that they had prepared. They stated in several ways that the arms race causes suffering and death now because money and resources are given to planning destruction rather than to serving the needy.

The Roman Catholic Church may soon overturn the 1633 condemnation of Galileo Galilei, who was condemned and sentenced for his theory that the Earth was not the center of the universe as had been believed. Pope John Paul II recently said that the work of a Vatican commission reviewing the condemnation "was progressing very encouragingly and there are good grounds for hoping that it will make an important contribution to the examination of the whole matter."

Seventy people from half a dozen more Mennonite churches in Winnipeg came to be informed about the nuclear threat and to seek appropriate forms of action Sunday evening, May 8, at Canadian Mennonite Bible College. The meeting was called by a reflection and action group which emerged out of a study group in the Charleswood Mennonite Church this winter.

Government witnesses testify at hearing for GC non-registrant

Wichita, Kan.—Another pre-trial hearing was held on May 23 in the U.S. government's prosecution of non-registrant Charles Epp of Henderson, Neb., currently a student at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan.

In an all-day hearing, Judge Frank G. Theis allowed Epp's defense attorneys to question three governmental agency employee witnesses as to whether or not Epp was being selectively prosecuted for not complying with registration laws.

The three testifying were former Selective Service director of policy Ed Frankle, current Selective Service employee David Cox, and David Kline, lawyer from the U.S. Department of Justice. Theis listened as defense attorney Arthur Benson questioned the three government witnesses on the formulation and implementation of prosecution policies for those who did not register for the draft.

Kline said that in Selective Service's discussion of the prosecution policy it was felt that while some federal judges might determine that there was an improper policy of determining who had or had not registered, some indictments needed to be handed down to prove that the government meant business.

Epp

Benson queried Kline about each of the 15 young men who have been indicted to date. All 15 had written to either the White House, Selective Service or the Department of Justice about their intentions not to register. Asked whether all 15 who had been indicted were "vocal" in the opposition to registration, Kline said, "No, only 13 of those were." Epp was one of the 13. Nationally, over 500,000 men have failed to register.

At another point Kline said that Department of Justice and Selective Service had discussed which groups would likely need to be prosecuted. At that time Kline had said that groups such as the Mennonites, who had been opposed in the past to such programs, would probably be among them. Officials decided, however, that there was nothing they could do, since they had to proceed with prosecutions for the sake of deterring others from not registering.

In being asked by the defense if more witnesses, such as White House counsel Edwin Meese or Selective Service director Thomas Turnage, could be called to testify, Theis said that enough information had been brought out in the hearing and in other documents which had been turned over to him by the government, and that further information gathering would not be necessary.

Theis has asked the defense to prepare a brief within 20 days based on the testimony in the May 23 hearing. The government will then have 10 days to respond, after which Theis will make a ruling as to whether or not Epp was being selectively prosecuted. If he is found to have been selectively prosecuted, it is likely the indictment will be dropped, while if the judge rules that there was no selective prosecution, the case will go to trial. No trial date has been set. *Fred Loganbill*

East German Lutherans recant 400-year-old persecutions

Berlin (Meetinghouse)—During festivities to mark the opening of the Luther Year, East German (GDR) church officials expressed on three occasions regret concerning Luther's and his adherents' sins against the Anabaptists. These celebrations took place on the Wartburg near Eisenach on May 4.

In an address carried on national television, the bishop of Thuringia, Werner Leich, cited the case of Fritz Erbe, an Anabaptist farmer who died without recanting his beliefs after nine years of imprisonment on the Wartburg. He then added, "Our thankfulness for the legacy of Martin Luther is linked with a plea for forgiveness from all against whom our fathers in the heat of the Reformation sinned."

A liturgical prayer stated that "Martin Luther was a sinner like unto us and is therefore no less dependent upon God's mercy than we are." It was also mentioned that Luther and Lutherans had sinned against Jews and the peasant followers of Thomas Müntzer.

In a press conference on May 5, Bishop Leich stressed that this year's celebration of the 500th anniversary of Luther's birth is to be distinguishable through its rejection of all heroization.

Though its results have not yet been publicized, these statements are obviously a response to the recent dialogue between the Evangelical (Lutheran and United) Federation and the Baptist Union of the GDR. The talks concern the further validity of the anti-Anabaptist article contained in the Augsburg Confession of 1530.

On May 4 the viewers of East German television were for the first time treated to Bible verses such as, "It is better to take refuge in the Lord than to put confidence in princes" (Psalm 118:9). Fortunately, this was also the premiere for the live and joint East-West transmission of a church event into both German states, as such biblical admonitions are not particularly frequent in West German mass media. *Bill Yoder*

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Bluffton (Ohio) College will sponsor a Summer Enrichment Program, offering five living-learning experiences to high school students July 10-15. The program is open to students who will be in grades 10, 11 and 12 next year, and to this year's graduating seniors. Students will attend workshops of their choice, enjoy afternoon and evening planned recreation and live in a college residence with adult supervision. Cost of the program is $125 for resident students, $75 for commuter students. Interested students should call the Bluffton College admissions office collect at 419/358-8015.

A year ago Somalia was in the limelight of international news reports. Mennonite periodicals covered the shipment of 10,000 metric tons of Mennonite Central Committee food aid to the Horn of Africa. The new emphasis among foreign aid organizations is to equip refugees to take over the role filled by foreigners until now. Some are working in water purification and resources, logistics, health, agriculture and community development. MCC's focus during the last year in particular has been to integrate agriculture, health, nutrition teaching and other community activities within individual refugee communities.

MCC responding to Bolivian flooding with food, health care

Santa Cruz, Bolivia (MCC)—March 18 flooding here has killed more than 70, washed out six miles of highway and two major bridges, and displaced up to 15,000 families. Mennonite Central Committee workers responded by providing emergency food and health care for the thousands who are now camped out in tents.

MCC worker Susan Peacock of Lancaster, Pa., who has been investigating the situation, wrote after viewing the damage, "What was once *barrio* (a neighborhood) is now beach, everything buried under two to three meters of sand. Most of the area is abandoned, but a few people were tediously digging out."

Although workers with MCC continue to investigate the situation and assess needs, MCC Latin America secretary Herman Bontrager sees the possibility of a longer-term MCC involvement in reconstruction. Work has begun on setting up new neighborhoods farther away from the newly formed riverbed.

Many of the flood victims have been moved to the government-sponsored Plan Tres Mil project located on the opposite edge of town from where the flooding occurred. After earlier flooding in January, approximately 1,000 families resettled on the site, designed to eventually hold 3,000 families. Now the site is overcrowded with between 15,000 and 20,000 people residing in rudimentary tents with plastic flysheets and without ground sheet. More families were arriving as recently as the end of April. The Red Cross, in cooperation with the Bolivian government, is coordinating relief efforts.

The displaced persons in the camps are plagued by a lack of drinking water and few, inadequate latrines. The result has been illness, primarily affecting children. One day the end of April, seven people died in the camp, and protests were aired over the radio station.

Curt Dorsing of Othello, Wash., and Glen Burkholder of Waynesboro, Va., are working on providing latrines for the camp. They reported that even such simple amenities as lids for the few latrines that are available are missing.

The government as well as international aid organizations have tried to get additional land, but even that is a difficult process that often is tied up in political jockeying. Some aid organizations are providing legal expertise to ensure that land titles issued are valid.

Colony Mennonites who live near Santa Cruz have donated several truckloads of relief to be distributed to the flood victims.

Laotian teacher training school takes delivery of aid shipment

Luang Prabang, Laos (MCC)—Mennonite Central Committee country representatives in Laos, Linda and Titus Peachey, visited the Junior High School Teacher Training School here and saw teachers and students using material aid items that MCC had sent the school.

"The knitted afghans and blankets, along with all the other aid supplies for the school, had arrived only about a week ahead of us," notes Linda Peachey. "The school officials themselves had picked up the supplies in Vientiane to ensure their safe delivery."

The Peacheys saw nearly all of the aid MCC had sent: blankets, mosquito nets, sleeping mats, insecticides, shovels, garden tools and vegetable seeds. The only items they did not see were a few pieces of kitchen equipment.

The Luang Prabang Junior High School Teacher Training School is a live-in institution serving the people of Luang Prabang and Sayaboury provinces. This year 600 students, 47 teachers and 39 service staff are living and working there.

In addition to teaching and studying, the teachers and students raise vegetables, tend animals and do other chores essential to daily living at the school. "Our basic living conditions are our most difficult problem," Boun Sittiemon, a teacher at the school, told the Peacheys. Government wages for teachers are among the lowest in the country, the Peacheys report.

Sittiemon teaches 10 hours each week, which he says is the average for most teachers in the school. Observes Linda Peachey, "That seems a light work load in comparison to teachers in the West. However, the teachers here have no textbooks and must prepare their own lessons and materials, thus increasing the time they must spend in preparation."

In addition, many of the teachers are taking supplementary courses each afternoon, taught by one of the several teachers who have graduated from the upper-level teachers' training college in Vientiane.

In Luang Prabang province there are a limited number of junior high school teachers. In order to rapidly increase the number of junior high teachers, the officials at the Luang Prabang Junior High School Teacher Training School have begun a special program this year enabling high school graduates to complete the necessary course work for teaching in one year instead of three. Normally junior high school teachers complete junior high school and then attend teacher training school for three years.

Two Lutheran church leaders were abducted April 27 by Salvadoran security forces. Medardo Gomez, 37, pastor of the Resurrection Lutheran Church in San Salvador and president of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of El Salvador, and Angel Ibarra, 26, medical director for the Lutheran Church in El Salvador, were reported missing by Lutheran Church officials on April 28. About 48 hours after their capture, the National Police admitted that the two were in detention. Gomez was finally released after three days. By May 6, Ibarra was still in detention.

A Mesoamerica tour, especially tailored for Mennonites interested in Central American issues, is planned for Aug. 9-19. The tour costs $925 per person from Miami and $800 for students, double occupancy, and includes visits to Nicaragua and Costa Rica. Topics to be addressed during the tour center around the deteriorating situation in Central America and the reasons for the crisis. For more information on the Mesoamerica tour write: Latin America Desk, Mennonite Central Committee, 21 S. 12th St., Akron, PA 17501.

Following years of working with male offenders, Mennonite Central Committee (Manitoba) is vigorously seeking funding to appoint a staff member who will work with female offenders and with wives of male offenders. The second expansion is a new role for Clarence Epp. He will begin a Specific Client's Planning Program Oct. 1. A person is available for the position of working with women; only funding is needed.

Helping children from the concrete jungle experience nature

Atlanta (MCC U.S.)—Children living in downtown Atlanta can learn about nature and walk along meandering trails in the peaceful, cool forest of the Outdoor Activity Center. This center, a 26-acre wooded area only three miles from towering skyscrapers, was established in 1975 by a group of Atlantans who wanted schoolchildren to study the environment and learn to respect nature.

"The children who come here sense quickly the awe and the mystery, the joy and the excitement of the forest," says Mennonite Central Committee U.S. worker David Kreider of North Newton, Kan., who works at OAC as an environmental educator.

Approximately 5,000 fifth-graders from Atlanta's public schools visit OAC during the school year. It is Kreider's job to lead them on tours through the forest. Most of these children come from families whose incomes are below the federal poverty level.

Their visit to OAC is often their first encounter with a forest and its small inhabitants. Notes Kreider, "They delight in the little things of the forest—a crawling spider or a glistening slug, an acorn top or a tulip poplar seed, a falling leaf or a moss-covered rock."

Kreider also leads children's clubs, day-care centers and other special interest groups through the forest. "Kreider's work has been invaluable to the center," says JoAnn Jackson, OAC director. "We would not have been able to run our fifth-grade program this year without him."

Because school groups come only in the fall and in the spring, Kreider's work at OAC varies. During the winter he worked with fund-raising bird seed sales. This summer he will be involved with renovating OAC's indoor exhibit room. Other duties include office work, general forest maintenance and overseeing first-time offenders who are sent to OAC through a Fulton County alternative sentencing program to make community compensation for their crimes.

This spring the OAC staff is also planning a six-week gardening program for an inner-city school. "We will go to Pitts Elementary School for one hour each week," explains Kreider. "The lessons will demonstrate different aspects of gardening such as preparing the soil and the importance of sunlight and water."

Yet Kreider most enjoys guiding the tour groups. On one particular tour a small girl tugged at his hand and pulled him away from the other students. "You know, Mr. David," she said, "trees are a lot like people. They need water and food to grow big and strong bodies and they have feelings too. They hurt when people damage them."

"Experiences like that are what makes my job so rewarding," says Kreider. *Marcia Heirman*

Kreider and a group of schoolchildren at Atlanta's Outdoor Activity Center

Old Testament opening

Applications are invited for an opening in teaching Old Testament and Hebrew at the **Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries**, beginning academic year 1984-85. Desired qualifications: doctoral degree and teaching or ministry experience.

Send resume and list of references to:
Jacob W. Elias, dean
Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries
3003 Benham Ave.
Elkhart, IN 46517.

In response to the May 2 earthquake in Coalinga, Calif., Mennonite Disaster Service has begun clean-up and repair work. C. Nelson Hostetter, MDS executive secretary, reports that 2,100 families have been affected by the earthquake. He estimates that 310 homes in the town were demolished and that another 560 have major damage.

A Marriage Growth Retreat for pastors, lay ministers, conference workers and spouses was held April 8-10 at Camp Arnes Lodge. A first-time event, sponsored by the Manitoba educational resources committee, the retreat was attended by 11 couples. The focus was on the individual couple and the partners' relationship to one another, rather than on the fellowship and social interaction of the pastoral couples. A variety of age groups was represented, ranging from two years of marriage to 33.

A new medical expense plan, the Medicare Supplement Plan, will be available from Mennonite Mutual Aid for new enrollments beginning July 1, reports Larry Newswanger, manager of church relations and services. This new plan complies with regulations governing coverage which supplements the U.S. Medicare program. MMA discontinued new enrollments in supplementary coverage last July because the current plan did not meet requirements. An "Outline of Coverage" explaining the details of the Medicare Supplement Plan is available from the MMA office in Goshen, Ind., or from MMA's area representatives.

Peace Section deals with Central America, draft, disarmament

Hillsboro, Kan. (MCC U.S.)—Mennonite Central Committee U.S. Peace Section members adopted resolutions on Central American refugees, the Middle East and East-West relations during their semiannual meeting, April 21—22 at Tabor College here.

Chairperson James Longacre of Barto, Pa., opened the sessions by outlining the context in which U.S. Peace Section is working. He characterized the present as "a time of danger, of challenge and of phenomenal opportunity" which requires "a deepening of our faith and witness."

He noted that many Catholic, Protestant and ecumenical groups are eager to address peace concerns and are looking to Mennonites and historic peace churches to lead the way. However, Longacre admitted that much uncertainty and apology about peace theology exists among American Mennonites today.

Section members discussed U.S. policy in Central America and the movement among U.S. churches to declare their buildings as public sanctuaries for refugees fleeing violence in Central America. The section encouraged MCC U.S. to appraise the current situation of refugees in the United States, to develop a long-term strategy for response and to increase aid to Salvadoran and Guatemalan refugees. The section expressed its support for those churches and persons who are offering aid and sanctuary to such refugees.

Delton Franz, director of the MCC Peace Section Washington office, and Urbane Peachey, executive secretary of MCC Peace Section, reported on their recent visits to Lebanon, West Bank and Israel.

Thursday evening, U.S. Peace Section members went to Bethel College to hear Jonathon Kuttab, a Christian Palestinian lawyer, speak about the Israeli military occupation of the West Bank.

In the discussion on the nuclear arms race and disarmament, section members approved a recommendation encouraging communication between North Americans and people in communist-dominated countries as an alternative to militaristic and nuclear deterrence definitions of national security.

The rationale for an effort to promote such person-to-person contact between U.S. and Soviet citizens was stated in a written report by MCC Europe director Walter Sawatzky: "One of the most important aspects of peacemaking is the task of so-called confidence building or trying to de-stereotype or humanize the enemy. Christians have an extremely important role in this because these so-called enemies are part of God's creation and our attitudes and perspectives must be shaped by that."

Ontario church offers financial expertise to members

Kitchener, Ont. (GCMC)—Need some professional money management counseling? Check with your church's "consulting group on financial affairs."

That's the name of a new committee at Stirling Avenue Mennonite Church in Kitchener. The group aims at assisting families with financial matters such as budget and credit management, putting people with financial needs in touch with agencies or individuals able to help, and providing a forum for the testing of ideas about financial planning and other ventures. The committee's membership consists of business men and women, retired and employed, who have developed business expertise.

One member who recently consulted with this group was pleased with the opportunity and options that grew out of the conversation. "It's a real privilege to sit down with people of business experience and financial expertise to explore options or to be referred to others. One could pay up to $100 an hour for a service like this, if it wasn't offered in the church," she said.

"At times, 'spirituality' and 'business' have been dichotomized, with a different set of norms for one than for the other," says Stirling Avenue minister Mary Mae Schwartzentruber. "Some members of our congregation have experienced the integration of these two factors through responsible dialogue with this group."

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For further information or application contact:
David Winter
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Phone 306/232-4222.

More than 3,500 evangelists from 133 countries have been invited to participate in an International Conference for Itinerant Evangelists in Amsterdam July 12-21, sponsored by evangelist Billy Graham. About 70 percent of the invited participants will come from Third World and developing nations, according to Werner Burklin, executive director of the conference and a West German church leader.

Members of the Bethel Deaconess Hospital Association attending the annual meeting on May 17 affirmed the intentions of the board of directors to merge the Bethel Home for Aged and the future developments of Kidron in North Newton, Kan. Also included in the new corporate entity to be formed—Kidron Bethel Retirement Services Inc.—are the Bethel Apartments which are operated as a part of the Bethel Home for Aged.

"A Step of Faith" was the theme chosen by the Elim Bible Institute (Altona, Man.) class of 1983 for the graduation exercises on April 24. Twenty-six students received special recognition after completing the two-year program. Ed Cornelson of Altona, formerly campus pastor at Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg, was the guest speaker for the service.

Providing emergency child care north of 53rd parallel

Winnipeg (MCC Canada)—"We have really felt needed. From the day we opened there have been only a couple of days where we haven't had any kids. . . . There's obviously a need for us here, and we feel very good about that." Those words describe some of the feelings of Penny Van Schoick, a Mennonite Central Committee volunteer at Marymound North, an emergency receiving home in Thompson, Man.

Marymound North Receiving Home is an arm of the Marymound Residential Treatment Centre in Winnipeg. The home provides short-term (up to two weeks) emergency care for children ages 2-17, north of the 53rd parallel in Manitoba. Children who are abandoned, abused or have run away live there until their home situation stabilizes or other arrangements can be made.

Previously children of the north who needed emergency care were being sent to Winnipeg. The Sisters of the Good Shepherd at Marymound recognized the need for services to be available in places like Flin Flon, The Pas, and Thompson. The original plan in these northern communities was to establish a network of support homes, but an even greater need was for a receiving home where children could spend time while waiting for placement. About a year ago the province of Manitoba approached the Sisters of the Good Shepherd in Winnipeg and asked them if they would like to open such an emergency home in Thompson. That request led to a search for volunteers with the necessary skills in child care to operate the home. Van Schoick accepted the supervisory position and she was joined by two other MCC volunteers, Mary Anne Harder and Mary Ellen Lee. The fourth staff person is Renée Sawatzky, a volunteer with the Sisters of the Good Shepherd.

Marymound North opened its doors in December 1982 and the response has been overwhelming. Van Schoick says, "We've had over 75 children stay with us since we opened—all different ages, one through 17 years, and for different reasons." The reasons vary from glue sniffing to juvenile delinquency and family problems with alcohol.

Marymound North is filling a vital need in the community of Thompson. Vern Redekop, pastor of the United Mennonite Church, says, "We're really delighted to have them (volunteers) with us because they all have something so real about their faith, the way they live it out and express it. . . . I think it helps to show the people in the church and the community that ours is an open church if we are constantly enlarging our boundaries."

At Marymound North the children are treated like family. The volunteers take on the role of parents, teachers, friends and mentors. Each day brings chores, school time, recreation and quiet times together with the children. Van Schoick says, "We believe in a value system based on the worth of each child and the dignity of each of them and their religious and cultural backgrounds. The four of us are Christians, we follow the way of Jesus and we believe in communicating his love and respect, not so much in what we say, but in how we treat them." *Robb Nickel*

Houseparents needed

The Mennonite Collegiate Institute is seeking a Christian couple to serve as student residence houseparents for 1983-84. Communication and leadership skills are required.

For complete information contact:
Ken H. Loewen, principal
Box 250
Gretna, MB R0G 0V0
204/327-5891.

North American
Mennonite
Youth Gathering

BETHLEHEM '83

- For youth from Mennonite and General Conference Mennonite churches.
- Scheduled for Aug. 1-7, 1983, at Lehigh University in Bethlehem.
- Registration will be limited to 2,000. Forms were mailed to congregations in February.
- Cost for this week-long event will be $156, plus transportation.

If you have questions/suggestions — write or phone:
Jo Bontrager
Bethlehem '83 Youth Gathering
Box 1245
Elkhart, IN 46515-1245
219/294-7536

Prepared by

COE

Commission on Education
General Conference
Mennonite Church
Box 347, Newton, KS 67114

side by side

eachy Amish and MCCer
onstruct refugee housing.

El Salvador. A country of civil war, fear, refugees.

MCC workers assist in a program directed by the Salvadoran Beachy Amish Church, providing housing and health care for refugees. Here and elsewhere, working alongside a local church is a priority for MCC.

The emphasis of Salvadoran Beachy Amish on service and their deep concern for the victims of war, inspires MCCers to continue serving in a place of widespread suffering.

Mennonite Central Committee, 21 South 12th Street, Akron, Pennsylvania 17501
MCC (Canada), 201-1483 Pembina Highway, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3T 2C8

LETTERS

Thanks from Botswana

I have just received the Feb. 15 issue and thank you for repeatedly providing us with such an ever-pertinent church paper—in this case the article on alcohol use and effects by John M. Drescher and Emory Draper. Without going into all the details, the facts stated in these articles are almost wholly carbon copies of the situation here in southern Africa. The senior superintendent of police at a symposium on alcohol use and abuse in Botswana stated that alcohol is one of the major contributing factors to the alarming escalation of crime in the country. A random survey of 16 villages showed that in every one of them some community and/or government project was hindered or immobilized because of the use or abuse of alcohol. While opening another of the myriads of bottle stores in this country, a government minister was quoted as saying that unless Batswana tempered their drinking habits, Botswana would be a nation of drunkards within 10 years.

I also find the articles by Cal Redekop stimulating. The reports concerning the state of our conference are informative and necessary for us who are geographically distant. And those short pithy paragraphs at the top of the page are always food for thought (and surely action). Keep up the good work. (Keep the issues regarding war and peace on the burner too.) *B. Harry Dyck, Box 669, Francistown, Botswana*

May 2

Do we choose life?

You deserve the gratitude of us all for opening up the question of abortion in your May 10 editorial. "We Choose Life" is a good sounding motto, but applied as those 37,000 signers do, it is inconsistent—if not hypocritical.

First, while they would be saving the physical life of an unbreathing fetus, they would be violating the emotional life of a suffering girl. She would not be going to an abortion clinic if she were not terribly unhappy about her condition.

Second, there is unfounded piousness in their presumption that a one- or two-month fetus is human life. It is organic life, but there is no evidence that it contains a spirit. If such a fetus were aborted, it could not be made to survive.

And third, saving unborn lives does not justify their boast that they choose life. "Life" includes immeasurably more than some prospective babies. There are many other forms of life which their crusade completely ignores, and in sometimes an utterly hardhearted way. Making a hue and cry about abortion distracts attention from the headlong plunge our governments are making toward the slaughter of a nuclear war. And every penny spent for this kind of propaganda could buy a bit of food for people who are starving to death in northern Africa. *Herman C. Johnson, Box 382, North Newton, KS 67117*

May 13

Thanks for truths

We agree with some recent letters from your readers that *The Mennonite* is getting better and better. And we appreciate that. I too like to read the last page first. Your Jan. 4 editorial about the Catholic used car dealer had some profound truths in it. *Elfrieda Schroeder, BP 4341, Kinshasa 2, Zaire* May 13

New version of John 3:16

Dennis Webber's "Impressions from a New Mennonite" (April 12 issue) was right on target, especially the areas of concerns.

After being inundated with announcements about peace marches, peace seminars and general antigovernment rhetoric in my congregation, I feel compelled to publish a new translation of the Bible, and John 3:16 will read, "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son, that whoever believes in the peace issue shall not perish but have everlasting life." *Dick Weber, 33 Miller Rd., Akron, PA 17501*

May 16

FILM

Growing up Mennonite

The Weight, *directed by William Myers, produced by J. Ronald Byler, screenplay by Joel Kauffman and William Myers, based on the novel by Joel Kauffman*

Reviewed by Gordon Houser, editorial assistant for The Mennonite

First, this is a laudable effort by some young Mennonite filmmakers working with a limited budget. I hope more films can germinate from the Mennonite experience.

The film is well-shot, the acting uneven—which may also reflect a need for better direction—and there are several places where better editing would improve the transitions from scene to scene. But it's hard to be critical with a first effort by people working with meager resources.

What bothered me more was the thematic unclarity. I had the feeling that the film wanted to present the question of conscientious objection to participating in the military, but that issue came across superficially. Instead, the film explores several facets of growing up Mennonite, but after plunging into one—for instance, what it's like to be a preacher's kid—we are carried into another facet without the thematic development needed to understand and care about the main character's dilemma.

Jon Sprunger, the son of a Mennonite preacher, is about to turn 18. He and his friends share fun times, but they differ about how they approach the decision of registering for the draft. It's 1972; the Vietnam War is in full swing. We watch Jon agonize over his decision, but we don't feel it with him; his agony needs fuller development.

Another puzzle for me was the intended audience. It seems geared for high school and post-high school people, but is it aimed at Mennonite young people or at a broader audience? If the latter, more explanation of who Mennonites are is needed. If it's for Mennonites, what is it wanting to say? I think Mennonite young people will enjoy *The Weight*, and some individual scenes may challenge them more than the film as a whole, while non-Mennonites will find it interesting but may wonder what the point is.

Tentmaking pastors is one option

Provincial and district mission committees feel limited in planting new congregations if the only way to do it is through fully salaried people often without church planting experience. It means risking large amounts of mission money on what may or may not become a viable congregation. With fully salaried people to support, they become cautious—a different mood than the on-fire church planters in our history who seemed ready to try anything anywhere.

Because of the expense and for other reasons, we wonder if every congregation needs a full-time seminary-trained pastor. Have we moved too far in upholding education and training for service? Are there other servant models still viable in our priesthood of all believers? This question becomes significant as we note people coming into the ministry later in life or lay people continuing in another vocation while serving as pastors.

The Southern Baptists did a study of their congregations to learn how those with bivocational pastors fared in comparison to those with full-time pastors. (Bivocational pastors are sometimes referred to as "tentmaking" ministers—a term from Acts 18:3-4 telling of the apostle Paul being in the tentmaking trade so he could be self-supporting while in Corinth.) They learned that these churches were doing as well in almost all areas as those who had full-time pastors. When it came to baptisms, the churches led by tentmakers had a baptism ratio per 100 members of 3.26 while those with full-time pastors had a 3.17 ratio. The one area in which churches led by bivocational pastors did not do as well was in the area of financial contributions.

Most of our new GC and related congregations in the last 10 years were started and developed by people without using a fully salaried pastor. Some of the members were in MVS and also not fully salaried.

Four mainline Protestant denominations in western New York state received a Lilly Foundation grant to do a study on dual-role clergy. Of those who participated in the study, 74 percent of the laity and 94 percent of the clergy were supportive of their situation. Lay members of churches with dual-role clergy generally had a positive image of their churches, were proud of their pastors, felt that their churches had improved and would be willing to hire another dual-role pastor.

The dual-role pastors reported they were happy with their dual status, were encouraged by their spouses and appreciated by their congregations. Those who entered the dual role for reasons other than financial testified overwhelmingly of benefits to themselves, their families and their churches. Spouses who had difficulty with the image of being the "pastor's wife" found it helpful to have their husbands in dual roles.

There are good reasons for us to challenge congregations and people interested in the pastoral ministry to consider becoming tentmaking ministers. (1) There is good theological and historical basis for such a ministry. (2) Pastors who have jobs are often more in touch with the communities and problems of the members. (3) Smaller churches without the financial base to support full-time pastors are enabled to have their own pastors. (4) The possibility of starting more new churches increases when leadership is largely self-supporting. (5) Older people with pastoral gifts and maturity who feel a call to the ministry can feel there is a place for them even though they do not have seminary training.

Encouraging people to enter the pastoral ministry as tentmakers will bring a dimension to the life of our churches that we have been missing—an immediacy and a vitality along with stability that could be very beneficial.

There also might be a new surge in church planting, especially if some of those tentmaker missionaries who were thinking about starting a congregation would know about some others wanting to do the same and would join them and share the challenge. *CHM staff*

One well cannot give sweet *and* bitter

William Keeney

U.S. peacekeeping troops, two of approximately 800, on duty in Beirut

When I was in high school the Chinese checkers game fad was sweeping the country. My father and I used to play the game by the hour. It was one of few games at which I could excel when we played together.

I won consistently, and my father kept trying to figure out why. He never did find a system to win. The basic problem was the strategies each of us used. He tried to find some way to block me from getting across the board into his corner. I tried to get across as quickly as I could, and generally blocked him only when it would not slow me down in moving my checkers. Basically, I tried to devise ways to reach my goal.

It may be that the Reagan-Weinberger strategy is suffering the same basic problem that my father did in playing Chinese checkers. They are trying so hard to win the security game against the Russians that they may be losing the larger game in the process.

The intent of the Reagan-Weinberger strategy is to block the Russians at every point to gain superiority. They want to build MX missiles to defend against a possible nuclear attack, to develop cruise missiles, stealth bombers, neutron bombs, particle beam weapons, laser weapons and chemical weapons so that any conceivable threat by the Russians can be met with a counterforce.

Unfortunately the Russians are playing the same game. And the Reagan-Weinberger administration is apparently trying to get the Japanese and the Western European countries to play the same game.

Ruth Sivard in a booklet on social and military expenditures has two charts which show how economic growth and arms buildup are connected.

One chart shows the growth of the Gross National Product—one measure of how healthy a country is (though one may question if consistent growth of the GNP is always healthy for the world). Another chart shows the percent of the GNP spent on the military. With one major exception (Canada) the major powers which she includes show that the higher the percent of the GNP spent on the military, the lower is the growth of the GNP.

Canada is the one significant exception which has a relatively lower percent of the GNP spent on the military but still has a low growth in the GNP. I suspect the reason for the exception is that Canada's economy is so closely linked to (dominated by?) the United States. The slow growth of the U.S. GNP spills over into Canada.

Two countries among those with higher growth of the GNP and lower relative expenditures on the military are Japan and Germany in that order. Both are major economic competitors with the United States and doing better.

The United States is pressuring both countries to step up their military expenditures. It seems to be learning the wrong lesson—trying to get them to play the same losing game my dad used to play.

It is not surprising that the United States is losing out to Japan and Germany in the use of technology to improve the economy. At one time the United States led in areas such as automobiles, electronics and steel production. Now about the only area in which the United States may have clear superiority is in computers—and the Japanese are closing fast.

It seems that trying to win the game by defending against the enemy is a losing strategy. To put it another way, James says you cannot get bitter and sweet water out of the same well (James 3:11-12).

You cannot invest in military technology and be able to keep a healthy and growing civilian economy. You cannot prepare for death and have the full and abundant life. If you put your capital into building nuclear bombs, planes, submarines, tanks and missiles, you do not have capital to develop automobiles, steel plants, electronics factories.

If you have about half your scientists and engineers in military research and development, you cannot stay ahead in developing civilian technology. Sweet and bitter water does not come out of the same well.

Both the United States and the Soviet Union—through an arms race in which they try to beat each other and exhaust each other's resources—may defeat themselves. Other parties may emerge as the real winners. That is unless one or both—the United States and the Soviet Union—get desperate in seeing that they are losing the game, resort to the use of their weapons and try to fight a "winnable" modern war. Then everyone loses, and judgment comes on all.

Feb. 12

William Keeney is visiting assistant professor of integrative change at Kent State University, Kent, OH 44240.

During the fall of 1982 he is serving as a visiting instructor at Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, ON N2L 3G6.

Help us find a name

The GC General Board has approved for the Commission on Home Ministries to proceed with a project it has been exploring for several years: a way to help new congregations with the high costs of a meeting place.

The building used by a congregation gives many messages to people in a neighborhood. One message given by a church buying property is like the message Jeremiah gave when he purchased property as things were on their way down. It says a church is willing to stand with a neighborhood through whatever risky changes happen. Other messages given by a meeting place are that the fellowship wants to be visible and that outsiders are welcome.

However, one big problem faced by new fellowships is that costs in metropolitan areas seem out of reach. Money can be borrowed, but the interest payments require most of the attention and energy that should be going to outreach efforts. Adding to the problem is the fact that new congregations are usually small and some are made up of new immigrants not yet on their feet financially.

A proposal has been made to find 500 donors (persons, youth groups, Sunday school classes) who would give $100 when called upon, up to twice a year. The resulting collection of $50,000 could help a new congregation or two to purchase property (total costs for a meetinghouse and property are often $250,000 or even more).

This kind of plan was tried years ago in some districts, but there were not enough new congregations needing help in just one district to keep the plan alive. Now that real estate costs are much higher and the needs of more than one area conference are considered, the urgency is much greater.

The program is just getting organized and still has no name. Central District called their plan "Kingdom Builders." The Mennonite Church has a support program called AIM (Associates in Mission). Whether or not you can be one of those who gives up to $100 twice a year, would you send us a suggestion for a name?

Send your ideas to: *Church Planting and Evangelism Office, Commission on Home Ministries, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.*

Don Steelberg (center), CHM chairperson, explains the 500-donor plan to General Board.

Mobile Member Project

The Mobile Member Project has been in operation for a little over two years, and over 450 names of people moving to a new location have been sent out. The project is carried on by one of the Commission on Home Ministries staff scanning the changes of address on the subscription list of *The Mennonite*. When it is noted that someone has moved to a new community, the name is sent to pastors in that community.

If there is no Mennonite church located in that area, the names are sent to Donald Yoder or Paul Boschman, church planting staff in the United States and Canada. This gives them some idea of the possible interest there might be in people starting a new Mennonite congregation.

The project has worked best when a congregation who has a member moving sends in the report card that CHM supplies. Relying for information on changes in the mailing list of *The Mennonite* often means a lengthy delay. But if the church sends in a name of someone who is about to make a move, the church in the new community can help welcome the newcomers or aid them in the moving process.

So far not many names are coming from congregations. The conference isn't anxious to pile more work on busy pastors, but getting the information directly from a home congregation is the best way to provide new contacts.

In our mobile time we need to care about people even as they move. It can be spiritually affirming when newcomers are greeted by church members who know they are coming. Let's work at it more carefully.

MOBILE
MEMBER
PROJECT

MEDITATION

Can you feel Central America?

Voices and faces are memories I will carry with me from my work with Central American refugees. Voices and faces telling of war, poverty, injustice, brutal and senseless killings of loved ones, ongoing suffering, loneliness and longing to return home—all etched sharply on my heart as though with a laser. A young mother—tears spilling from her eyes—tells of the little girls she left behind: "Some nights as I lie awake crying I feel I have to go back just to see my family one more time. But I know I have to suffer and endure here because I can help them more here than if I return, see them once, and am killed—because I would be killed." The barely audible voice of a 16-year-old boy with a far-off gaze describes the atrocities of the U.S.-supported army that murdered two of his brothers and his female cousins: "But you know, I think the worst thing is when they cut open the stomachs of pregnant women and throw the fetuses to the dogs. . . ."

Lord, have mercy on your sinful children. Once again we have turned our backs to you, and brother is killing brother. Lord God, forgive us. We too are complicit in these unspeakable crimes—for it is our money and our silence which has put the guns in the hands of those who would slaughter their own people.

I see the deeply lined, weathered face of an elderly woman who has lived years of repression and poverty seeing her children die of malnutrition and disease; now seeing her children killed by bullets and machetes. I look at the yet innocent face of a child who has daily seen and experienced death and destruction, who has grown up in fear of bombs and soldiers, of the sounds of helicopters, of the dead bodies on the steets. Faces reflecting the years of suffering they've endured, the unspeakable terror they've fled and the continued fear and mistrust in which they live. Fear of deportation to El Salvador, a fate which for many could mean death.

Lord, I have never really known suffering. It is frightening and challenging to look it in the face, especially as I realize my part in it. At times I want to turn my head, to hide my eyes and deny. It's too overwhelming, too intense.

But as I look again, I see the gentle reflection of a Christ who knows what it means to suffer. God becomes one of us, sharing our hopes, dreams, fears and sorrows.

I begin to understand more of what it means to be a follower of Christ. God on a cross, put there by unjust systems and by those seeking power, by those who feared him because he spoke the truth and did justice. God, trying to show his children the way we were created to live, the way of love, was brutally killed.

The people of El Salvador and Guatemala are also being crucified, also suffering and dying on a cross. But we know there is no death without resurrection. Christ rose and lives, offering us life abundant. So too will a new day dawn for the people of Central America, a day bringing justice and freedom. But as we face the darkness before us now, I cry to you for mercy, Lord. I lay before you my anger, my fear, my powerlessness, my despair, asking *you* to transform them into the love which has power over all things. Give me strength and wisdom to confront evil and sin with truth and love.

Miriam Wiebe

CONTENTS

The Commission on Home Ministries over the last several years has seen its role of being a resource to regional conferences and to individual or clusters of churches grow significantly. It is encouraging to see more Christians become directly involved in ministries close to home. The world is our mission and often the mission in immediate neighborhoods is really our world.

This issue focuses on our mission wherever we are. Yes, there are places for special missionaries, but you and I are also called to be witnesses.

Special thanks to Stan Bohn, CHM executive secretary; David Habegger, secretary for congregational life; Robert Hull, secretary for peace and justice; and Alberto Quintela, Jr., secretary for Hispanic ministries, for their assistance in putting together this CHM issue.

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EDITORIAL

The Cross and Word puzzle

"In the beginning was the Word. . ." (John 1:1a). Sounds simple, concise and precise.

The Word is powerful, ". . . sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to . . the thoughts and intentions of the heart" (Hebrews 4:12).

God's Word is action: ". . . and God said . . . and there was. . ." (Genesis 1).

Mennonites are people of the Word. We love the Word, believe the Word, try to follow the Word. We'll hassle any person, congregation, conference institution or other body that seems to create even the slightest question about God's Word.

"The Word became flesh and dwelt among us. . ." (John 1:14a) to seek and to save the lost.

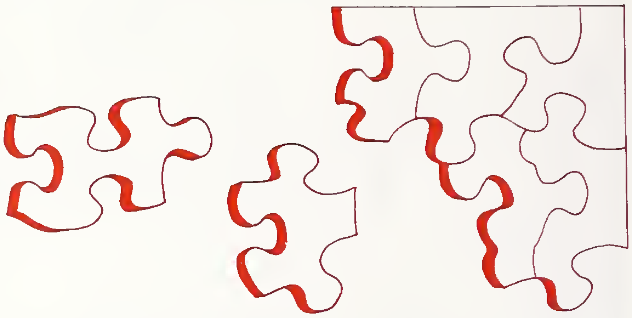
Our forebears—the early Anabaptists—though also known as biblicists, or Word people, became a people "on fire." They spread faith wherever they went. Some individuals reportedly guided over 1,000 people into the kingdom.

Then the early persecutions in Europe, the major acceptance into mainstream "churchianity" in Holland, and problems we don't all agree on in the 1700s and 1800s in the Palatinate, Russia and in our early "American" history, made us into a Quiet People (*Stillen im Lande*). We kept to ourselves and tried to live the Word.

But there is no escape. Today's Mennonites must also move from their cocoon of comfort in "wall-to-wall" Mennonite villages, communities and "closed" congregations.

Our General Conference founding meeting in 1860 got its strongest impulse from an "increasing sentiment toward missions" (Pannabecker, *Open Doors*, p. 38; see also p. 62). At first this movement mainly followed Mennonites moving away from the centers. Then work began among Indians in Oklahoma, Montana and Arizona (1880-1893). City missions started in Los Angeles, Chicago, Altoona, Pa., and Hutchinson, Kan. (1909-1917). Overseas work began in India and China (1900-1909).

The driving missions' (evangelism) impulse came from the Word. It soon became essential to add deeds like hospitals and schools to the preaching.



The Word that came among us, Jesus Christ, not only preached and taught; Jesus healed, fed and clothed the literate and illiterate regardless of skin, creed, gender, status and age. Integration of Word and Deed resulted in the Cross. Mennonites have a Cross and Word theology that goes beyond adding good works to sound preaching.

Word evangelism, however, has been our common vision. Here we readily found unity and sometimes won many for Jesus Christ.

When our missions stuttered—for example, among Indians and blacks—we found it difficult to integrate our Cross theology into our evangelism. Yes, we were willing to add deeds of kindness. But somehow we have often been unable to add the servant stance of the Cross. Cross evangelism remains a perplexing puzzle among us.

Does the Cross include serving political "enemies" (for example, MCC work in Vietnam)? Would Jesus—the Living Word—have challenged an arms race that claims to save us even as it gobbles the resources needed to feed the world's hungry?

Can the Cross and Word help us to incorporate our newly planted churches—Asian, Hispanic, native, dual-conference, black, and fresh street converts—into our GC family? Must they first pass the Word/Cross test?

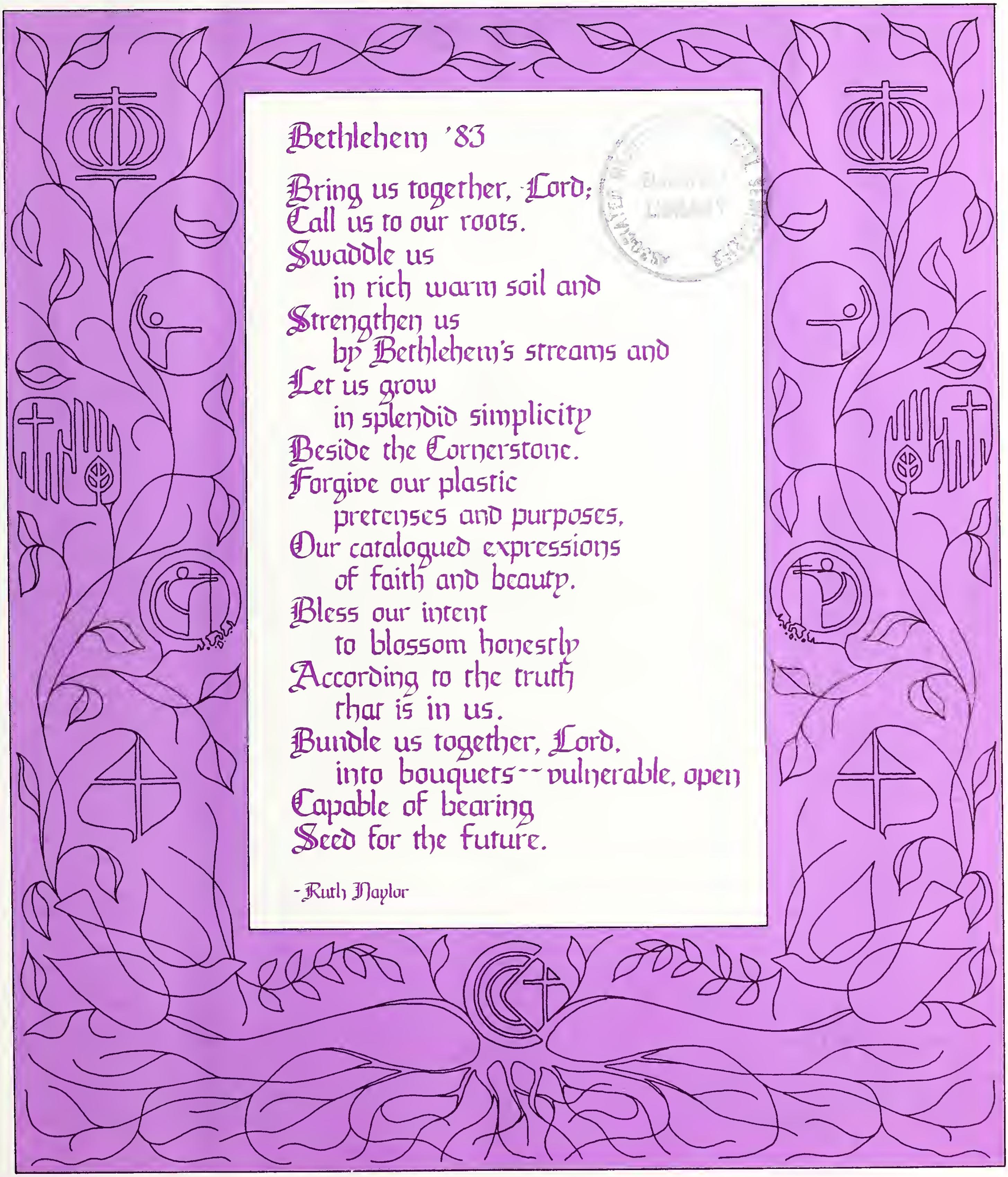
The Cross and Word theology teaches us to care more and speak less (James 1:19-27).

Ours is a time of verbal overload and severe spiritual inflation in words and social services. In such a time we must show that we are Cross people" . . . looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, who endured the Cross, *despising the shame*, and is . . . at the right hand at the throne of God" (Hebrews 12:2). Jesus is the beautiful model as we fill our parts in the puzzle. *Bernie Wiebe*

THE MENNONITE

OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST

98:13 JUNE 21, 1983



Bethlehem '83

Bring us together, Lord;
Call us to our roots.
Swaddle us
in rich warm soil and
Strengthen us
by Bethlehem's streams and
Let us grow
in splendid simplicity
Beside the Cornerstone.
Forgive our plastic
pretenses and purposes,
Our catalogued expressions
of faith and beauty.
Bless our intent
to blossom honestly
According to the truth
that is in us.
Bundle us together, Lord,
into bouquets--vulnerable, open
Capable of bearing
Seed for the future.

-Ruth Naylor

Looking for something 'more'?

Gwen Schlichting

Instead of fretting about our inability, we recognize his ability.

I awoke to the soft "pad, pad" of the slippered feet of my 4-year-old as she made her way down the hall to my bedroom.

"Mommy, when can I go to heaven?" She was beginning the day with that part of life which currently held her in complete fascination.

I managed to pry open one eye. "Whenever Jesus decides it's time, Sweetie."

"But when will that be?" she persisted, not to be pacified by the reiteration of yet another evasive response.

"I don't know, Christy. Could be soon—but maybe not for a long, long time."

"But Mommy, I just can't wait!" she wailed with intense impatience.

There was no doubt about it, my mothering had definitely begun for the day. "Why don't you go and paint a picture of the room in heaven that Jesus is getting ready for you?" I suggested.

"A beautiful red one," was the announcement as she purposefully headed toward the playroom and the oft-used jar of red paint.

While my daughter translated her inner vision of heaven into a glorious splash of scarlet on white, I marveled again at how real the unseen world can be to children. I recalled Jesus' admonition that adults are to become like little children. How delighted God must be with the wide-eyed acknowledgment of his kingdom that he perceives in children. If heaven was as real to adults as it is to children, praying would be as natural and necessary as scratching when it itches.

Most of us, however, have experienced times when prayer seems neither natural nor necessary. Sometimes it doesn't seem effective either. One of the main reasons this is so is that our vision of spiritual realities can be dim. But the root difficulties relating to prayer are even more basic.

A study of the Bible reveals the premise that God acts and we respond. God spoke to Abraham, who then moved his household to an unknown country. God promised to give the Israelites the land of Canaan, which they subsequently took under the leadership of Joshua. God called and guided the prophets as they provided leadership. In the record of Jesus' life we see the perfect example of this principle in operation. Jesus spoke and acted only in accordance with what he perceived his Father to be saying and doing (John 5:19, 30). And the writer of Acts is careful to point out the priority given by the leaders of the early

The basis for a fruitful prayer life is to pray in response to the motivation of the indwelling Holy Spirit.

church to follow God's initiative.

It is important to note that God does not wait for us to seek him before he reaches out to us. He says through the prophet Isaiah, "I revealed myself to those who did not ask for me; I was found by those who did not seek me. To a nation that did not call on my name, I said, 'Here am I, here am I.' All day long I have held out my hands to an obstinate people, who walk in ways not good, pursuing their own imaginations . . ." (Isaiah 65:1, 2).

This is the Word of the Lord to us today; he is the initiator of all activity in his kingdom. Through the Holy Spirit he is convicting, guiding, revealing and teaching (John 14:26; 16:5-16). And we human beings are in the position of being the ones who respond.

What this means is that just as we do not become members of the kingdom of God apart from his calling us and causing us to be reborn of the Spirit, so also we will not pray apart from the activity of the Spirit of Christ. The basis for a fruitful prayer life is to pray in response to the motivation of the indwelling Holy Spirit. He is the one who will first of all reveal to us God the Father, God the Son, heaven and all those other spiritual realities which cannot be perceived through the intellect and the physical senses with which we absorb this world. He is the one who will give us the desire to pray and will even organize our hectic lives so that there is a time and place for prayer. He is the one who will provide the substance of our praying even when we don't know what to pray (Romans 8:26).

The experience of prayer motivated by the Holy Spirit will yield a number of special insights. The first and most significant discovery to be made is that such prayer is worship. I was intrigued to note the definition of prayer given in *The New Bible Dictionary:* "In the Bible prayer is worship that includes all the attitudes of the human spirit in its approach to God." Not, "one aspect of prayer is worship," nor, "one's attitude in prayer should be worship," but *prayer is worship.* The key significance of approaching God in worship is that the focus is on him rather than on us. This revolutionizes prayer.

One obvious result is that we don't spend nearly as much time complaining, analyzing and otherwise dwelling on ourselves and the realities of the situations we bring to him. Rather we concentrate on him and the realities of his kingdom. Instead of fretting about our inability, we recognize his ability. Instead of dwelling on the apparent chaos of a situation, we rejoice in his creativity and the fact that Jesus has already been declared victor.

When we worship, we not only recognize God for who he is, we also get a proper perspective on ourselves. He is the Creator; we are the ones he created out of dust. He is the righteous King; we are his erring subjects. He is our wealthy heavenly Father; we are his needy children. God hears the prayers of those who approach him in appropriate humility.

Our position in prayer as worship is one of rest. We know who he is, we know who we are, and we lean on him. We do not expend energy unnecessarily in worry, we do not experience undue stress, we are at peace.

This is not always your experience? I am the first to admit I also have not yet "stilled and quieted my soul" (Psalm 131:2). But if we recognize that prayer is worship and change the focus of our prayer life accordingly, then we can experience the position of rest which God promises his children (Hebrews 4). Jesus says, "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light" (Matthew 11:25-30).

A second discovery to be made regarding prayer activated by the Spirit of God is that such prayer is service. This is because the worship God seeks is for his people to meet the needs of others. We are to be servants who correct injustice and create new life by humbly "washing feet" as directed by the Spirit of Jesus. Wherever his kingdom of righteousness, peace and joy has not yet come, God looks for intercessors (Isaiah 59:15, 16). Just as Jesus the Suffering Servant interceded (John 17) and lives to intercede forever (Hebrews 7:25), so his Spirit moves us to serve one another through prayer (Romans 8:27). Intercession can be the best and is sometimes the only way to "wash the feet" of those whom we love.

The most gratifying insight regarding prayer inspired by the Holy Spirit is that because it comes directly from the heart of God it is appropriate, powerful and effective. This does not necessarily mean that we will see immediate results nor even that we will ever see any results. It does mean we need not be discouraged; God has initiated the prayer and he will see to its resolution.

By the time I had Christina's breakfast made, heaven was clearly visible in the playroom. Perusing a proliferation of paintings which graced the walls, we marveled at the beauty of heaven's many rooms (red for Christy, green for Mark, violet for Daddy . . .), its splendid streets of gold and its amazing trees of many-colored fruit. Such clarity of vision is not for children only. Whether or not we are looking and listening, God is holding out his hands to his people and saying, "Here am I, here am I." He wants us to quit "pursuing our own imaginations" and invite the Spirit of Christ to guide and inspire every area of our lives, including prayer. "And when once we have heard his voice, the depths of our being are no longer a tangle of conflicting urges and shoreless immensities, but a window opening on real Infinity and a place alight with the fructifying presence of God" (from *On Prayer* by Karl Rahner). •

How shall we then pray?

Clarence Bauman

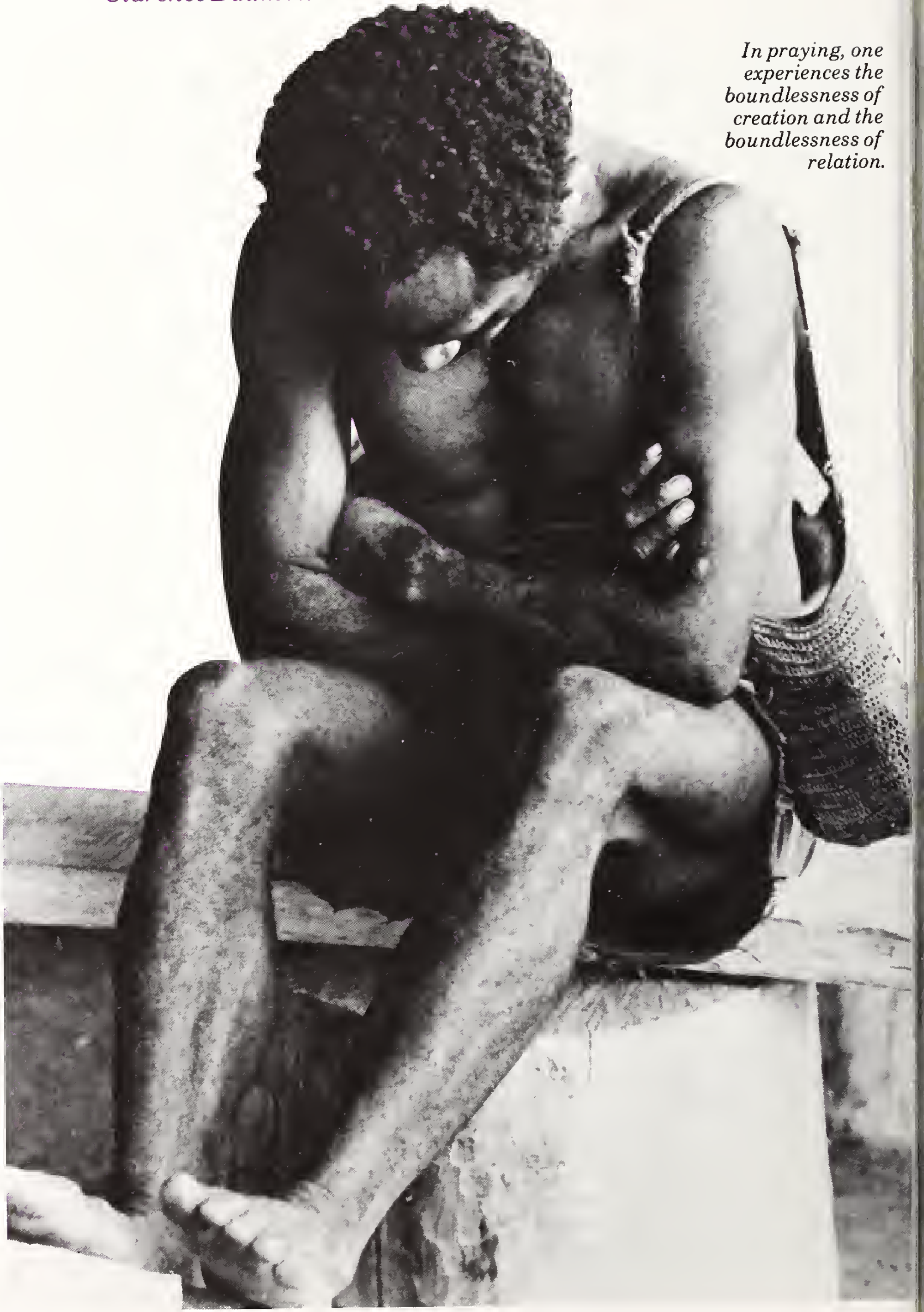
Editor's note: In our first article, Gwen Schlichting whets our appetites for more quality in our prayer life. Here Clarence Bauman challenges us in his style. If you would like to deepen your prayer communion, this article can help you. For some it will come at first reading; for others it may take two, three, four and more readings. Some may want to read this with Bible, Bible dictionary, other dictionary, Bible commentary and encyclopedia on hand to seek further for the spirituality profoundly expressed herein.

Occasionally readers criticize us for printing articles that require sincere study and reflection. But God's Spirit moves among us rarely along the "instant everything" mode we have come to expect in Western culture and in Western Christianity. We do need to look and look again—deeper and longer—to find part of those Spirit truths which go beyond human wisdom.

"Seek and ye shall find."

Prayer is spiritual formation—the conscious and volitional discovery and recovery of God's providential intentions. It is the dialogical process whereby our hearts and minds are informed and conformed to know and to do God's will. It is spiritual illumination and existential transformation involving our highest awareness and deepest commitment and claiming all that we are and hope to be. Within the cosmic parameters of creation and consummation and the existential limits of our own consciousness, God intends that we understand and control our history and destiny according to his mind and will. This happens through prayer.

Jesus differed from others in his prayers. His prayers reveal that he knew who God was—most people don't; that he knew who he was—most people don't; that he knew his calling and vocation—most people don't. Jesus' relation to God was immediate. The secret of prayer is the mystery of this relation.



In praying, one experiences the boundlessness of creation and the boundlessness of relation.

The modern crisis. Modern Western thinking resists mystery. Scientific cosmology and liberal theology challenged the metaphysical assumption of God up there somewhere in his celestial remoteness. The essentialist structure of being is replaced with an existentialist process of becoming, reducing prayer to a solipsistic (self can only know self) language event. Instead of "lifting the receiver" for the heavenly telephone, enlightened people "elevate their minds" to meet their needs on earth—without reference to heaven.

Biblical prayer overcame the power of evil in demons, humans and nature. In our modern awareness the efficacy of medicine replaces that of prayer as scientific technique dispenses with supernaturalism in the interests of physical and mental health.

The experience of a mighty ocean, a majestic mountain or a terrible storm inspired the ancients to worship a supreme being. But modern thought discounts these naturalistic influences and psychoanalyzes those instinctual projections and oceanic feelings out of which transcendent moods are fabricated.

Consequently, in the hour of death, modern humanity, having lost faith in its own omnipotence, has nothing to which it can say yes. Christians also suffer from these disillusionments—except those who pray on their knees.

The purpose of prayer is not to inform God of our needs, but to invite him to rule over lives.

Spiritual dynamics. (1) Praying is an act of spiritual obedience as "Thy will be done" incorporates our freedom within the mystery of God's providence. In prayer we respond to the awareness that God loves us and desires our personal fellowship and wills that we should pray "without ceasing" (1 Thessalonians 5:17).

2. Praying is the event of being touched by the breath of God to become a living soul—the actuality of a spiritual "I" in dialogical relation to the "Thou" of God. In prayer our relation to God is at once unconditionally exclusive and inclusive in the awareness that the whole world is full of God—who is at once the holy Other and yet wholly present. In praying we address the transcendent God beyond ourselves, not an immanent good within ourselves.

3. Words of prayer are building blocks of spiritual reality; they do not describe a situation, they constitute it. For when I pray, I am the reality I express. Prayer is the mystery of God's word becoming our word, and the history of our word becoming God's word. This primal language-event (*Wortgeschehen* or *Sprachereignis*) is awesome and overwhelming in its creative power and limitless claim.

4. To pray is to transcend our ego and our mind in reach for God, to be detached from our egoistic self, to be filled with consciousness of God and to understand our life in the light of the Holy.

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In praying we address the transcendent God beyond ourselves, not an immanent good within ourselves.

This awareness frees us from the narrowness of self-interest, enabling us to discern the vital from the futile, to clarify our profoundest hopes, discover our truest aspirations and confirm our highest intentions of knowing God's will.

5. To pray is to experience ego transformation. The self-identity no longer consists solely of self-perceptions and self-aspirations. In praying, one experiences the boundlessness of creation and the boundlessness of relation. Prayer frees me from the necessity to define and defend myself at all costs or over against all others. Prayer relieves one of the necessity to survive by opening up the wonder of an awareness transcending personal fate.

6. To pray is to dwell on the edge of the cosmic mystery that sustains our world and to absorb the secret stillness that envelops our life before birth and after death, an awareness that fills us with profound gratitude for the inconceivable surprise of living. Through prayer we discover that the whole world is full of God in grateful praise so evident in the boundless imagination of the clouds, the unconquerable majesty of the mountains, the humble beauty of the flowers and the eloquent melody of the birds. This awareness evokes in us the desire to participate as latecomers in creation's choir and to be relieved of all our heaviness which keeps us from fully entering that celestial realm.

7. Prayer is not a material or emotional need but an ontological necessity without which it is not possible to be fully human. Prayer is not expedient, practicable or useful as a supernatural means toward natural ends. It is not to be "used" for the preservation or enhancement of life, nor misused as a political function. Prayer is not just good *for* something, it is good in itself.

8. Prayer is an act of self-purification. It enables us to be honest, to stand for what we believe, to integrate our thought with our conscience and to confirm our faith in the purity of truth and our trust in the simplicity of the good. Prayer is a light that makes visible the right. Its purpose is not to inform God of our needs but to invite him to rule our lives.

9. Prayer is our ultimate aspiration but not our own inspiration. Communication with God is not our achievement and the presence of God is not our possession. We may yearn and wait for it, but we do not and cannot bring it about. When it happens it is the result of his, not our, initiative. We may open the gates, but we do not determine the entry. We experience the inspiration to pray, but we do not inspire its event. We produce the words we utter but not the enlightenment of the consciousness for which we yearn. To the thinker, God may be an object; but to the pray-er, God is the subject of our own vital knowing and being.

10. Our relation to God and others was meant to be unmediated. Mediation implies unfulfillment and estrangement requiring intravention to resolve contravention. Because God is one in his knowing and being, all primary relations are immediate relations. (This *Unmittelbarkeit im Gottesverhältnis* marks the spiritual uniqueness of Jeschua's *Sendungsbewustsein* and constitutes the heart of the kerygma.) Through appropriation of the Divine Presence we become present where we are. In the mystery of history our potential oneness was meant to be included in God's essential oneness.

11. In praying through words we need to recover the dignity of words. Words are meant to embody the fruit of spiritual insight and commitment in our relationships. Words of prayer are not made of dust or paper but are repositories of the living spirit, as we rekindle the light within the word and encounter the Divine Presence within it.

12. Liturgy is meant to express the spontaneity of life, not its dead form. "Better a little with *kavanah* (empathy) than much without it," lest the text replace the soul. Limiting the expression of our spirituality to repetition of liturgical prayers is like limiting our conversation of life to rereading old letters from deceased friends.

13. Private prayer requires for its survival and health the larger context of spiritual life within a community of prayer in the formative oneness of God's own people. Those who pray together stay together, and those who pray for each other become spiritual friends. At the heart of every spiritual community is a house of prayer (*Poustinia*), and at the formative center of each Christian home there needs to be a consecrated prayer room.

14. To pray for the world means to believe in the world as the place where God speaks and acts and where we are to coexist as a spiritual presence in holy worldliness. Spirituality is always essentially an innerworldly affair, an incarnational reality embodying the whole of life. If we continually practice the presence of God, our times of business will not differ from our times of prayer.

15. The ultimate response to God is silence. Prayer begins where expression ends. It derives not from words but from spiritual intuition. Silence constitutes the mystery surrounding every word and sustains the truth within the word. Our speech was meant to express the divine silence in the human word, "Be still and know that I am God" (Psalm 46:11).

16. The reality of prayer cannot be defined or contained. Spiritual life transcends all established order. Prayer is not an experience, and when I pray it is not my experience. Prayer is the epistemological and ontological event in which I realize and fulfill the meaning of my being in Almighty God—my Creator and Redeemer—who loves me and binds me in gracious covenant to himself. Lived prayer is the event of his theophany and our spiritual formation, on earth as in heaven. The ultimacy of all spirituality depends on its intrinsic immediacy—the secret dynamic of all spirit and life. The reality of prayer transpires in the noödynamics (nous — Greek: mind) of God's love as our worldly form embodies his eternal life. •

There is beauty all around

Ken Peterson

On April 1, 1868, John Muir set out afoot for Yosemite. It was the bloomtime of the year, and the landscapes of the Santa Clara Valley were drenched with sunshine. The air was quivering with the songs of the meadowlarks and the hills were so covered with flowers that they seemed painted. John wandered slowly through these glorious gardens, enchanted by his first glimpse of the California flora. Finally he arrived at the Great Central Valley of California, and on one shining morning his eyes were cast upon the most beautiful landscape his eyes had ever seen—a vast golden flowerbed at the foot of the mighty Sierra, one rich garden stretching 500 miles long and 40 or 50 miles wide. Beauty was all around.

I love the beauty of nature. A forest, a flower garden, a grassy meadow can capture my heart and fill it with joy. In our world—from the desert to the sea, from the mountains to the plains—there is beauty all around.

This carpet of beauty that covers the continents is the vegetation with its over 350,000 varieties: flowers of every color and shape, blooming in the spring, trees that multiply into forests, grasses that blanket the hills and valleys.

This bounteous beauty of vegetation is here as a gift of God. "And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after its kind, whose seed is in itself: and it was so" (Genesis 1:11).

As the sea divided from the land, the great continents rose out of the sea, and slowly the soil rose upon the continents—the earth was prepared for the abundance of vegetation. The early atmosphere of the Earth included a blanket of clouds covering the entire Earth—giving a greenhouse effect—which at the time had little oxygen in its atmosphere. The greenhouse effect produced massive vegetation—this beauty all around, this massive plant life covering the continents. The vegetation, in the process of photosynthesis, released great amounts of oxygen into the atmosphere, preparing the earth for higher forms of life which depend upon oxygen in the atmosphere.

There are more than 350,000 kinds of vegetation. Tree-covered forests cover almost a third of the Earth's land surface—softwood forests, hardwood forests, tropical rain forests. There are about 20,000 kinds of trees—palm trees, cottonwoods, maples, oaks, firs and pines. More than half of the various kinds of vegetation are flowering plants—woodland flowers, mountain flowers, prairie flowers, desert flowers, water flowers, beach and shore flowers, meadow flowers, swamp flowers, tropical flowers and garden flowers. We behold white Easter lilies, beautiful red-leaved poinsettias, many-colored tulips, delicate violets, lovely wild roses and fields of golden California poppies. From the fields and hills to the gardens and altars—there is beauty all around.

A very useful beauty it is, for our lovely vegetation provides us with food, clothing and shelter. The animal kingdom depends upon the vegetation for food, and so does humanity. The beautiful vegetation gives us life on two important levels. One is the level of physical life—food for the body. God has provided for our physical well-being. "Give us this day our daily bread"—bread . . . food from the soil, the fields and gardens. Give not only me my daily bread but, O God, give us all upon this special planet the food we need. And just as important is emotional life—food for the soul, delight for the eyes. Beauty is a gift of God—leaves with delicate designs, flowers with colorful delights, trees of grandeur, symmetry and dignity.

The beauty of creation, of vegetation, points to a beautiful Creator. God is clothed in beauty. The beautiful God delights in beauty and has created beauty for his own and for our delight. God would put beauty into our lives. God would take the dull out of our lives, take the darkness and ugliness away and give to us the good of creative beauty. May you be given the gift of God—beauty all around and within, and may you create a beautiful world wherever your feet trod. *Sixth article in a series on Genesis*

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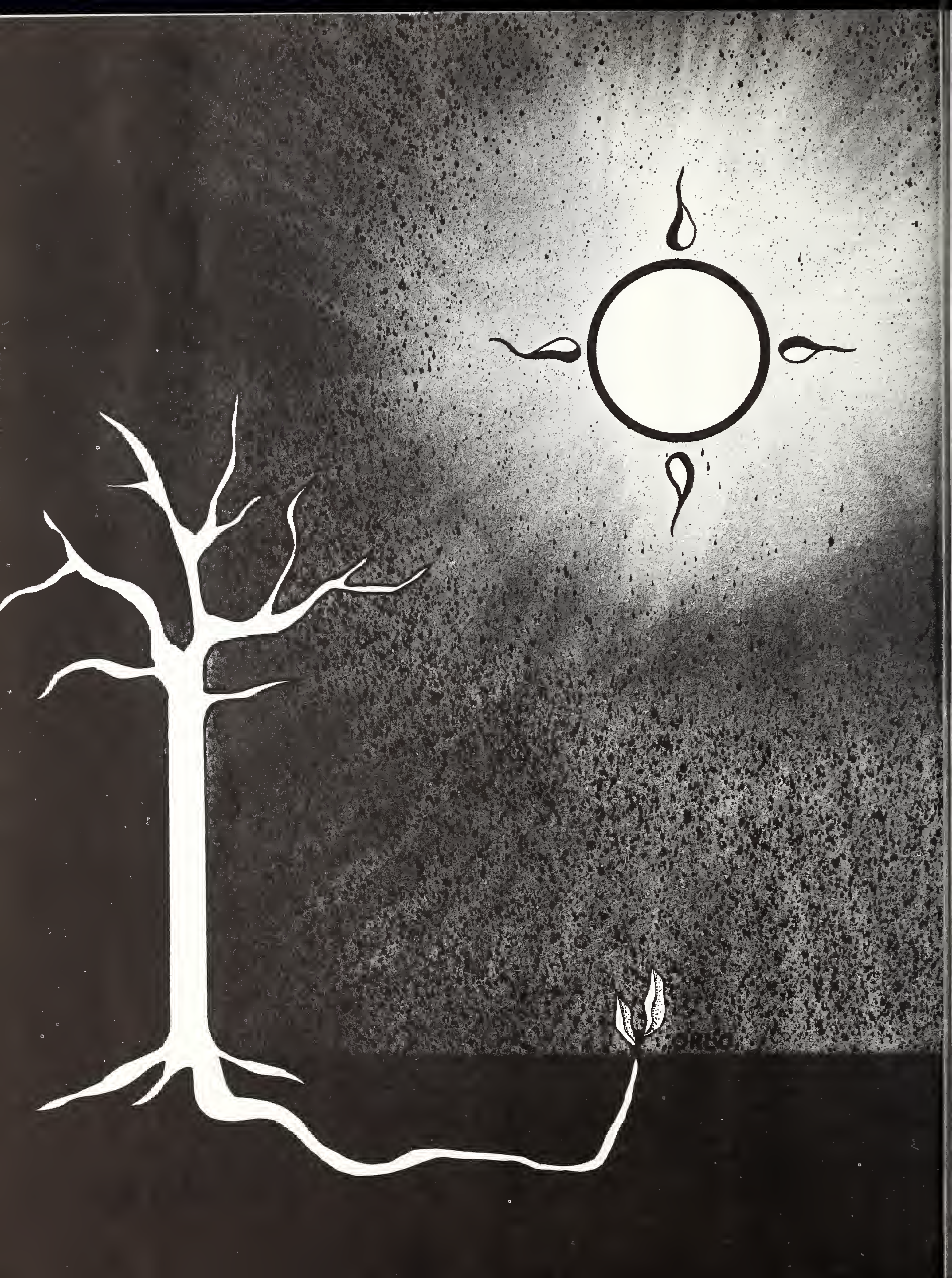


ORLO

God gives us true hope

Waldemar Janzen

Hope. Hope is born through a promise, expressed or unexpressed. A friend says, "I'll come over tomorrow." An employer tells a job applicant, "Come in on Monday and we may have something." A doctor tells his patient, "We'll start a new treatment."

Many promises are non-verbal. A look at the sky may promise a nice day for a trip. A smile from an admired girl gives a fellow hope that she may accept a date. A good grade in math may suggest a future in engineering to a high school student.

Such promises generate hope—a positive expectation of the future. In theological language, promise points toward fulfillment. Hope fuels movement into the future. It overcomes stagnation and generates energy to live and to work toward the promised goal.

We live by hope all the time, committing ourselves to the good that each new day may bring, but we feel our hope most consciously when a promise reaches us in the depths. When the friend we had given up calls again after all, or when a new medical treatment promises to dispel the fear and gloom that had begun to accumulate in our mind, we experience the surge of hope most clearly. Thus hope often comes to us as new hope against the backdrop of beginning hopelessness.

This is true of the biblical stories that model and inspire hope. Abraham left Mesopotamia in search of the land promised to the descendants. The promise had evoked hope. But it was the renewal of that promise to a people in slavery in Egypt, through Moses, that became the central story of hope in the Old Testament. A new beginning, an exodus, breaks Israel's captivity and opens the way to God's leading into a new future. In the New Testament, the depth of the Cross is the backdrop for the great promise of God's ultimate victory, the Resurrection. Hope is most fully experienced when it is new hope.

Hopelessness. This "anatomy of hope" would remain incomplete without reference to its opposite, hopelessness. Hopelessness sets in where no good word from the future woos us toward a goal. And just as hope is most powerful in the form of new hope, hopelessness is deepest when felt against the backdrop of disappointed promise. When the expected visitor does not come, when the promised date is called off, when the new medicine does not work after all, then anticipation sinks back into disappointment and perhaps into despair. I will never forget the moment in 1945 when I stood at the window and saw the Russian tanks roll into the village where we were refugees after we had been west of the Iron Curtain for four years.

That hope can turn into hopelessness raises the question of validity. Our language has many expressions for hope that is unreliable: false hope, wishful thinking, rosy glasses, pie in the sky, utopia, castles in the air, greener grass on the other side. They testify to a wide trail of disappointment trodden out by human beings. How valid is hope?

Guarantors. Hope stands or falls by its guarantor. As children we came to trust our parents as good guarantors. Playmates would let us down, we soon learned, but what Mom and Dad promised could be counted on. There were other people whose words stood firm. In time we learned that God is the ultimate guarantor of hope. We learned this from the testimonies of Israel, a people that had experienced in a special way that God acted "faithfully," i.e. in keeping with himself he had saved Israel from Egypt and he continued to lead his people toward freedom and life, even at the cost of his own Son. The apostles and church fathers added their testimonies.

But such a trust in a God who will be with us in the future can grow only where people have spoken words of promise to us and have guaranteed their validity with their being. This may happen without lofty words and outside of religious contexts. I remember the nurse who attended me on the night after major surgery. "Try to sleep now," she said, "and before I go off duty I'll come back. Then I'll give you a sleeping pill if you need one." I did not need that pill; the promise was enough.

I have at various times used the same "technique" to help tense or sick people or children go to sleep, "Try to sleep now and I will look in again in an hour. If you are still awake then, we'll talk for a while." It often works, and it is not really a technique if by technique we mean a method of operation that is effective in itself. To give hope through promise works only if we back our word with our whole being. I must really be back in an hour, fully prepared to sit with the patient or child far into the night if that should be needed.

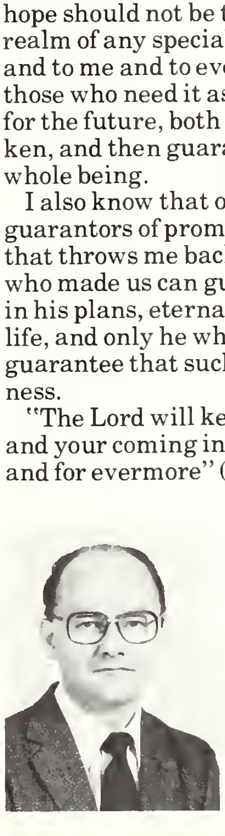
Our psychology-conscious world tries to help troubled people with its various types of therapy. If I were to write a book on Christian counseling, I would entitle it "hope therapy." In our world that so easily turns to cynicism, any help to live must be help to hope.

Such a book would spell out how the counselor must extend a promise into the life of the despairing person. It must assure him, "Whatever else I might be able to do, you can be certain I will stick with you." Perhaps the first step would be nothing more than another appointment, "We will speak about this again next Thursday at 3:00." To a student finding it difficult to cope with a certain project I have often said, "Take a few minutes tomorrow to stop by and show me how far you got tonight." That was often enough to turn aimlessness into purposeful work.

I know well that all this is common knowledge and I am not a professional psychologist and will never write my book on hope therapy. And in any case, hope should not be tied too closely to the realm of any specialist; it belongs to you and to me and to everyone. We give it to those who need it as we extend promises for the future, both spoken and unspoken, and then guarantee them with our whole being.

I also know that our capacity to be guarantors of promise is limited, and that throws me back on God. Only he who made us can guarantee us a future in his plans, eternal (i.e. God-centered) life, and only he who saved us can guarantee that such life is life in its fullness.

"The Lord will keep your going out and your coming in from this time forth and for evermore" (Psalm 121:8).



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John H. Yoder, professor of theology at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Ind., and Notre Dame University, lectured in Warsaw, Poland, May 11-20 at the invitation of the Ecumenical Council of Poland. His lectures were part of the ongoing East-West dialogue in which Mennonites have participated since the 1950s. Yoder also spent several weeks itinerating in western Europe.

Mennonites in Harrisonburg, Va., gathered on Good Friday (April 1) to attach over $300 to about 75 helium-filled balloons. Each balloon, in addition to a five- or ten-dollar bill, carried a note from a participant explaining why he or she had withheld the money from current income taxes. "Because we are Christians who are trying to follow the peaceful way of Jesus, we cannot support this country's military build-up," said many of the notes. "Instead, we have chosen to 'waste' our money in a more constructive way." Participants read Scripture, sang, danced, prayed, confessed their sins, and clowns passed out jelly beans as the balloons rose.

NEWS

Broad implications seen in Supreme Court ruling

Newton, Kan.—A U.S. Supreme Court decision handed down on May 24 in a case between the Internal Revenue Service and several schools in the Carolinas may have far-reaching implications for religious groups and organizations, especially those taking positions critical of U.S. government policy.

In an 8-1 decision, the high court upheld the right of the IRS to revoke the tax-exempt status of Bob Jones University, Greenville, S.C., and Goldsboro (N.C.) Christian Schools on the grounds that their discrimination against blacks violates public policy. "An institution seeking tax-exempt status must serve a public purpose and not be contrary to established public policy," the ruling said.

Although the May 24 judgment dealt primarily with the issue of racial discrimination, religious leaders were more concerned with the broad interpretation of "public policy" which could be derived from the ruling.

"In this particular case [the court] had no problem defining the public policy because there have been so many acts of Congress regarding racial discrimination," said Duane Heffelbower, an attorney in Reedley, Calif., and member of the Division of Administration of the General Conference Mennonite Church. "But there are not many areas in which things are quite this clear.

"What the court has said is that in order to be a charitable organization, and therefore tax-exempt, it must function with the public good as its purpose. If its actions are directly opposed to the public policies of the U.S. government, then it is, by definition, not operating in the public good. It is therefore not charitable, and therefore not tax-exempt. And while in this particular case they [the IRS] have chosen an issue such as racial discrimination which is very clear from a policy standpoint, we don't really know what public policy is, we don't know who sets it—whether it is Congress or the administration or just some bureaucracy within the government.

"Therefore what the IRS now has is a weapon to be used to drive people back into line, and that's the danger of it. This was one of those 'hard' cases that makes bad law."

Heffelbower

According to Hefflebower, pacifist groups such as the Mennonites are among those most susceptible to spin-off applications of the ruling by the IRS. "When it becomes the established public policy of the government to have a war, either declared or undeclared, or to treat Central American refugees as illegal aliens and return them to their countries, and when we as a church then oppose those policies, it could be very easy for the IRS to take away our tax-exempt status as well. Our support for those who feel they cannot register for the draft is a good example."

Other religious groups with unpopular stands or idiosyncratic tenets of belief could also be affected by the decision, should the government choose to wield its power in their direction. According to a story in the May 25 issue of *USA Today*, some Jewish leaders are concerned about the implications for their religion's practice of treating women differently than men, according to their reading of Scripture. The article quotes Dennis Rapps, executive director of the National Jewish Commission on Law and Public Affairs, as saying, "In Judaism, there are different roles for women and men, and there are separate programs for them in our schools. We are concerned that this ruling must not be expanded to other areas besides race discrimination."

Rapps continued by saying that if the Equal Rights Amendment eventually passed, separate male and female schooling could be viewed as "contrary to public policy."

The judicial battle between Bob Jones/Goldsboro and the IRS has been watched with special interest by GC administrators since the summer of 1981, when the conference submitted an *amicus curiae* ("friend of the court") brief to the Supreme Court, asking it to hear the case, since important religious freedom and personal liberties issues were at stake despite the fact that the conference disagreed strongly with the discriminatory policies of the schools.

At that time Vern Preheim, general secretary for the GCMC, defended the submission of the brief on behalf of the Bob Jones and Goldsboro schools by asserting that the principles at stake overrode the disagreements between the church and the institutions on matters of race.

Commenting on the court's decision in the case, Preheim said, "I am concerned that the 8-1 vote could be used as a strong precedent for the IRS to become and enforcer of public policy in other areas." *Larry Cornies*

Scenes for a 90-minute documentary on the history of Mennonites in Russia were shot or are being shot in Winnipeg and surrounding communities such as Winkler and Steinbach, as well as in Fresno, Calif. The film, tentatively titled *And When They Shall Ask,* will chronicle the story of the Mennonites whose origins began in Czarist Russia in 1788. Producer Dave Dueck of Dueck Film Productions in Winnipeg said the main section of the film deals with events between 1910 and 1930. Financing for the $400,000 production was raised among members of the Mennonite community in Western Canada. Film director is John Morrow.

Scene from And When They Shall Ask

Amnesty International believes that as many as 225 unarmed villagers were massacred by government troops south of Kabul, Afghanistan, in two incidents late last year. AI has called on Afghanistan's president to investigate the incidents—and to charge the officials responsible if the allegations prove correct.

CIM sees renewal movements 'breaking up old patterns'

Elkhart, Ind. (Meetinghouse)—After all was said and done at the Council of International Ministries meeting May 24-25 here, nearly 30 Mennonite mission administrators agreed that God has the last word.

"The kingdom of God fortunately doesn't depend on our efforts," said James Bertsche, who is CIM chairman and executive secretary of Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission.

Wilbert Shenk, CIM executive secretary and overseas missions director for Mennonite Board of Missions, gave credit to the Holy Spirit. "Renewal movements everywhere are breaking up old patterns and ignoring organizational structures," he said. "The renewal movement has much to teach us."

Held twice a year, the CIM meetings are a chance for 15 Mennonite and Brethren in Christ mission agencies to share ideas and coordinate their efforts. This time the gathering place was the campus of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries.

The shortcomings of development programs in the Third World and the urgent need for leadership training in overseas churches were discussed at length by the administrators. Representatives from Mennonite Central Committee, which receives much praise for its efforts to improve the living conditions of people in 40 countries around the world, said they are doing some serious evaluation of their development philosophy. "We are seeking a biblical critique of development," said Nancy Heisey Longacre.

On the matter of leadership training, Don Jacobs of Mennonite Christian Leadership Foundation said Mennonite leaders in overseas churches are too few, lacking in proper training and not always able to function effectively. "We're in a leadership crisis," said Jacobs, noting that the worldwide Mennonite church grows by 50 members every day and will reach 1 million by the year 2000.

CIM's task forces on Africa and Latin America reported during the meeting that an inter-Mennonite leadership training center for Africa is being considered and that a "seminary without walls" is about to be started in Central America.

In a break from the usual agency-by-agency reporting session, CIM members heard about issues which are facing the churches in four continents. Speaking on Africa, Hershey Leaman of Eastern Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities said most of the countries on that continent suffer from failing economies, political troubles and rampant corruption. "The hopes of these countries, when they became independent in the 1960s, have been dashed," he said. "To what extent will the church in Africa remain faithful in the midst of hardship? How can mission agencies be loving partners?"

"In Asia, poverty continues to be a great issue as the number of people below the subsistence level increases," said Paul Myers of MCC. Peacemaking is another issue, said MCC's Bert Lobe, who visited China recently to check on the China Educational Exchange program which CIM helped start. "People exchanges like this break down stereotypes and promote peace between countries," he said.

In Latin America, said John Wall of Mennonite Brethren Missions/Services, North American agencies must root out colonialism, which still persists at times in the way they conduct their mission efforts. MCC's Herman Bontrager said that ferment and oppression and revolution in Central America is causing Mennonites there to ask themselves who they are and what they stand for. "This is a healthy development," he said, "and has been one of the reasons for the rapid growth they are experiencing."

Peter Hamm, a Mennonite Brethren Missions/Services administrator who had just returned from Europe, said there is such insecurity and dislocation on that continent that one is reminded of the periods before the First and Second World Wars. He said Europeans are greatly concerned about peace and environmental issues-two areas about which Mennonites should have something to say.

In other matters, the CIM:

- agreed to encourage participation in a seminar on "The Way of the Gospel in Socialism" just prior to the Mennonite World Conference assembly in Europe next summer. Hosted by the Alliance of Evangelical Christians in Yugoslavia and Mennonite workers in that country, it is an attempt to help Mennonites and others in Third World countries which have become socialist in recent years.
- responded to two stimulating videotape lectures by Lesslie Newbigin, a British mission leader, writer and lecturer.
- heard that JELAM, the Latin American Mennonite media agency, is holding a major consultation in Puerto Rico in October to deal with concerns that it is not organized properly to meet the needs of Mennonite churches in Spanish-speaking countries.
- rejoiced at the progress of the Spanish curriculum project, which will have materials ready for use in churches by January.
- received an update on the situation in Ethiopia, where the Mennonite church has gone underground following the confiscation of its property and the imprisonment of six of its leaders. No changes were reported in that situation.

Steve Shenk

Teachers live longer, according to the *Chronicle of Higher Education*. A recent survey of eight Eastern States concluded that school and college teachers have an average life expectancy of one to 2½ years more than that of people who work in industry.

The Immigration Reform and Control Bill (Simpson-Mazzoli) came one step closer to implementation May 18 when the U.S. Senate approved its version in a 76-18 vote. The House is expected to begin considering its version of the bill sometime this summer. The Senate bill contains a legalization provision that offers amnesty and eventual citizenship to aliens who are now in the United States illegally and can prove long-term residency. Undocumented aliens who arrived after 1979 would not be eligible for amnesty and could still be deported under the existing law. The House version sets Jan. 1, 1982, as the cutoff date.

Revising the process of electing the Mennonite Mutual Aid Association board of directors and engaging an architect for a building addition highlighted the MMA board of directors meeting May 13 in Goshen, Ind. Beginning this fall, the entire membership of MMAA will be asked to vote by mail for those who will serve on the board. The board also approved a recommendation to engage LeRoy Troyer and Associates of Mishawaka, Ind., to develop plans for an addition to the MMA office building in Goshen.

MCC worker assists Salvadoran refugees entering Honduras

Mapulaca, Honduras (MCC)—Early in the cool morning, 20 refugees appeared on the crest of the hill, winding their way down toward a small group of foreigners monitoring the border between El Salvador and Honduras. The women arrived smiling and shook hands with those who would soon lead them to safety and the United Nations High Commissioner on Refugees (UNHCR) camps several miles inland.

The Salvadoran refugees told Luke Hurst, Mennonite Central Committee worker who accompanied the group to the town of Mapulaca, that they had wandered and hidden for 10 days before they reached the border. They left a small village near Guazapa, a heavily conflictive area 20 miles from San Salvador, the capital.

The refugees were poor. Two young women carried babies. One 55-year-old woman wore a cross around her neck. There were young children and a couple of older men. One 80-year-old woman had problems with her shoe coming off and the group stopped while another woman tied a strap around it to keep it in place.

Hurst, originally from Harrisonburg, Va., writes, "I paused several times to observe the single file of human beings who had just fled their country with little more than the clothes on their backs. I wondered what they thought of us Americans who were now receiving them after having American bombs and bullets destroy their families, friends and crops. I had the fleeting thought that maybe I could make up in a small way for the problems my people had caused them, by being present that morning."

The refugees were questioned by the military in Honduras. The older men and boys were frisked. After it was determined that they were, in fact, refugees and not guerrillas, they were transported on the back of a truck to Mesa Grande.

Refugee camp veterans endure the turmoil as still more suffering persons arrive.

Mesa Grande, a UNHCR refugee camp located about 10 miles from the Salvadoran border, is home for over 10,000 Salvadorans. MCC and the Honduran Mennonite Church are in charge of agriculture, water, sewage, housing construction and communication in the Mesa Grande Camp.

Earlier in April Hurst accompanied another group of refugees in the back of a truck on their way to Mesa Grande. The refugees who had walked from San Lorenzo in northern El Salvador had spent seven days along the border waiting for someone to escort them across.

MCC cooperates with the UNHCR in helping with border monitoring to ensure that refugees wanting to leave El Salvador are allowed to leave in peace. Word is received at reception centers that a group of refugees, usually women, children and old people, have arrived and need to be escorted across the border. Then several international observers are sent to the border to guarantee their safe arrival.

Crossing the border into relatively peaceful Honduras has been dangerous for Salvadoran refugees escaping violence in their own country. In May 1980 the Salvadoran and Honduran armies cooperated in a joint maneuver designed to discourage the flow of refugees. The so-called "sandwich operation" was conducted on the Sumpul River that forms the boundary between the two countries just a few miles from Mapulaca. The Honduran soldiers lined up along the river bank to block the passage of the refugees while the Salvadoran army fired into the terrified peasants. A priest who visited the massacre site several days later and interviewed survivors estimated that 600 were killed.

Canoeing mishap claims Native Ministries volunteer

Winnipeg (GCMC)—David Lehman, a volunteer under the Conference of Mennonites in Canada's Native Ministries Board, died in a canoeing accident near the Bloodvein Indian Reserve in northern Manitoba on June 4. Lehman, 34, was attempting to maneuver around rapids when his canoe overturned. He was a member of First Mennonite Church, Berne, Ind.

A wake and service of mourning were held at the reserve the following day, while a memorial service was held several days later at Grace Mennonite Church in Selkirk, Man. Funeral services were conducted in Berne on June 10.

The United States lost 280,000 jobs in 1981 by investing $20 billion in nuclear weapons research and procurement rather than in the civilian economy, according to a private study published recently. Entitled "Destructive Investment: Nuclear Weapons and Economic Decline," the research was conducted by Employment Research Associates of Lansing, Mich. Every $1 billion spent in 1981 to buy weapons, planes and missiles created 24,000 jobs, according to the study. But the same sum spent by taxpayers to purchase consumer goods and services would have generated 38,000 jobs.

A weekend Bible conference was held April 15-17 at the Silowa Conference Centre in Transkei, Southern Africa. Fifty people attended the conference, at which a study of Acts was begun. Larry Hills, Commission on Overseas Mission missionary there, reports that he had a book table at the conference and sold 150 books, Bibles and booklets to participants.

Several non-registrants have expressed interest in speaking with Sunday school classes and congregations about the non-registrant position on the U.S. compulsory military draft registration. Any groups or individuals interested in such discussion can contact the CHM Peace and Justice Office, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, 316/283-5100.

CMC delegates to consider proposal for church building fund

Winnipeg (CMC)—The Conference of Mennonites in Canada will have a more active church building fund if delegates at this year's annual conference, July 8-12, approve a proposal which the Congregational Resources Board and the finance committee have prepared.

The fund, which would eventually have as much as $1 million in it, would provide loans to churches which have difficulty qualifying for commercial loans but which would be able to demonstrate to the conference that they could repay their loans over a period of 10-15 years.

A "means test" would be applied to congregations which seek loans to see if they qualify. If they are eligible, the test would also help the conference determine what sort of principal grants and interest subsidies they should receive.

The grants and subsidies would be new features. Up to 75 percent of the fund's earnings would be used to reduce the interest rates of the various loans. The remaining 25 percent would go toward building up the equity of the fund.

Churches which do not have sufficient equity to pass the means test would be able to apply to the Congregational Resources Board for a grant. CRB would budget some monies annually to provide grants to churches which need help in getting the equity they need to become eligible for a loan. Congregations which fall short of meeting the minimum criterion will also be encouraged to increase their cash equity in various other ways, such as deferring their building project so that their building funds can be enlarged.

It is the view of CRB and the finance committee that most churches in the conference would not need help from this fund. They would be over-qualified, surpassing the means test. These congregations would be encouraged to seek loans from other sources.

Nominations slate for Commission on Home Ministries U.S.

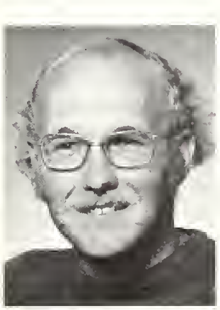
Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—A slate of four nominees has been assembled in preparation for the election of two representatives to the Commission on Home Ministries U.S., should that structure be approved by delegates to the U.S. caucus at Bethlehem '83. The caucus session is planned for Monday, Aug. 1 at 1:00 p.m. Nominees are as follows:

Willis Busenitz, pastor, White River Cheyenne Mennonite Church, Busby, Mont.; chairperson, Mennonite Indian Leaders Council, 1978—; president, Northern District Conference, 1979-83; past member, home missions committee and committee on the ministry, NDC. Vision: "I see CHM U.S. as being a servant to U.S congregations, helping them deal with U.S. concerns such as the draft, and bringing justice and hope to native American peoples."

Pearl Janzen, church and community worker at Moencopi (Ariz.) Mennonite Mission; MILC staff person for Arizona; Mennonite Voluntary Service worker, 1979-83; MCC voluntary service worker, material aid and Self-Help, Reedley, Calif., 1977-79; member, First Mennonite Church, Reedley, Calif. Vision: "To work more effectively with native Americans within the General Conference."

Busenitz

Janzen


Schmidt

Wikerd

Fred Schmidt, dairy farmer in rural Newton, Kan.; member of Tabor Mennonite Church, Newton; 10 years (1972-82) spent working with emotionally disturbed children and mentally handicapped adults in Ontario; voluntary service worker, Fort Wayne, Ind., 1966-68. Vision: "To broaden our perspectives of the needs of those around us and to explore new ways to motivate individuals and families to become involved in voluntary service experiences."

Paul H. Wikerd, pastor, Bethel Mennonite Church, Lancaster, Pa.; chairman, Eastern District Conference peace and social concerns committee; member, EDC ministerial committee; former pastorates in Reinholds, Kempton and Allentown, Pa. Vision: "I see the U.S. caucus and CHM U.S. as valuable channels for coordinating those concerns of our churches that are of interest primarily to those of us in the United States."

The presidents of the five General Conference districts in the United States served as the nominating committee for the election.

Planners for Bethlehem '83 encourage people to register early for the sessions to be held Aug. 1-7 at Lehigh University, Bethlehem, Pa. By May 19, 1,319 adults from both General Conference and Mennonite Church groups had preregistered, plus 315 children. After June 30, registration costs are increased from $47 to $57.

General Conference Mennonite Men will hold its triennial business meeting during the Bethlehem '83 conference on Friday, Aug. 5, 5:00-6:45 p.m. Robert Ulle, chairman of Eastern Pennsylvania Mennonite Historians, will speak on "Germantown: Gateway to the New World." The business session will consider a new project proposal for 1983-86. All GC men are invited.

A special rally for handicapped people, their friends and families will be held Aug. 4 as part of the activities planned for Bethlehem '83, the joint conference of the Mennonite Church and the General Conference. The rally will include music, drama, speakers, the Friendship Community Quintet of Lititz, Pa., and a mime from the First Deaf Mennonite Church of Lancaster, Pa. The rally will begin at 6 p.m. in a tent near the Stabler Arena at Lehigh University in Bethlehem, Pa.

Fifty-one graduate from AMBS, enter various fields of service

Elkhart, Ind. (AMBS)—For the 51 candidates graduating from Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Ind., May 27, commencement speaker Mary K. Oyer shortened the distance between classroom and congregation as she told how African ways of knowing have affected her Western "visual, linear and logical mode of learning."

Oyer, professor of music at Goshen College, addressed the commencement held at Elkhart City Church of the Brethren.

"Fifteen years of trying to learn African music," she said, "has and is changing my outlook." In telling stories of her learning experiences in Africa she revealed the rich heritage of learning through hearing rather than the dominant Western mode of sight.

"You'll work with people in your ministry who are on your wavelength," Oyer told the graduates. "They will value the tools you have acquired. I hope you do too," she said. "You will also encounter people with ears . . . men and women who can't write a term thesis, who don't care to think in linear fashion but in bursts of insight," she said.

The graduates, she said, will find people in their ministry for whom "the dense combination of events in a given moment is more important than the flow of time." Some people "will catch a parable," she said, more readily than a well-reasoned argument.

Of the 35 graduates in the Master of Divinity program, 20 (14 men and six women) are entering a pastoral or congregational ministry; seven of these are still negotiating or looking for a congregational ministry assignment.

Two of these graduates have been called into community service ministries, three are entering campus ministries, three are planning overseas mission (in Japan, Nigeria and Guatemala), one will take up a teaching ministry, two plan further study, one is continuing a free-lance writing ministry and two are yet discerning their call.

The seven MA in peace studies graduates will be moving into a variety of involvements: missionary service in Japan, pastoral ministry, working with an emerging church, peace education, farming, native ministries and congregational peace ministry.

The two recipients of the Certificate in Theology are engaged in a team pastoral ministry. Four of the students receiving the Certificate in Theological Studies will be going overseas (to Zaire, Nigeria and Angola), one is anticipating graduate studies in music, one is taking a pastoral assignment and another is furthering her studies and accompanying her husband into congregational ministry.

"These graduates have enriched our lives here at AMBS," said Dean Jacob W. Elias. "We send them forth with prayer that might inspire and empower them for their various ministries."

Canadian health assembly studies disabled, elderly

Clearbrook, B.C.—And God said, "I name you my children: Therefore, let no one else define my sons and daughters. Call no one 'crippled' or 'disabled' or 'useless.' They are persons: persons with disabilities, persons with handicaps, persons with accumulated age."

Such an attitude was evident at the annual conference of the Canadian Mennonite Health Assembly, a loosely knit organization made up of representatives from Mennonite owned and operated service institutions such as hospitals, extended care facilities and rest homes. Using the theme "In His Image," the conference took place in the facilities of Columbia Bible Institute here April 26-29. Speakers, discussions and workshops dealt with how God's image in every person impacts the care of the elderly or disabled person. A total of 110 people registered.

"Communicating His Image Through the Media" was the topic for the first evening. On Wednesday, delegates had two choices: one track dealt with the developmentally disabled and the other with care of the elderly.

Dean Bartel, a consultant for MCC's Mennonite Mental Health Services, was one of the featured speakers. He addressed the questions of where God's image had gone as far as the disabled person was concerned and how the disabled person might fit into the church.

Alfred Heinrichs, manager with the Clearbrook Golden Age Society, spoke of how the Clearbrook Community Center is an example of what "golden agers" are able to do when given an opportunity to use their administrative and other skills, which do not disappear simply because a person is retired.

On Thursday Cliff Ratzlaff, a clinical psychologist, created quite a stir with his paper entitled "Sex and the Senior Citizen." His contention was that many seniors would still find pleasure in expressing their sexuality but are not able to because of societal myths, lack of private places in rest homes and the disapproval of their children. Ratzlaff raised an issue which, judging from the delegate response, surfaces frequently in the care homes.

The last two sessions were largely inspirational. *John Vooys*

Chilean political detainees have been tortured by security forces at a secret center equipped for torture with one or more doctors actively participating, says new evidence published by Amnesty International. The 65-page report, "Chile: Evidence of Torture," cites the cases of 19 former detainees who were medically examined by an Amnesty International mission which visited Chile last year. "In certain cases," concludes the report, "there are grounds for believing that one or more of these people [doctors] actively participated in torture." International codes of medical ethics forbids such participation.

The Mennonite Advocates for Disabled Persons steering committee met at Laurelville (Pa.) Mennonite Church Center April 11 to work further on structure and organization of the group which was formed last August at the family retreat for handicapped persons. MADP, an organization for parents of disabled persons, is planning to provide resources to assist local groups of parents to become organized for the purpose of mutual support, advocacy and church awareness. For further information write or call Evelyn Gunden, Box 370, Elkhart, IN 46515, 219/294-7523.

An art exhibit of professional and nonprofessional artists will be featured at Bethlehem '83. This will include pottery, sculpture and other three-dimensional media as well as paintings, prints and drawings. Artists desiring more information may write to Roland Yoder, 335 Maple Ave., Harleysville, PA 19438.

Grain supplies in Ethiopia dwindle as drought continues

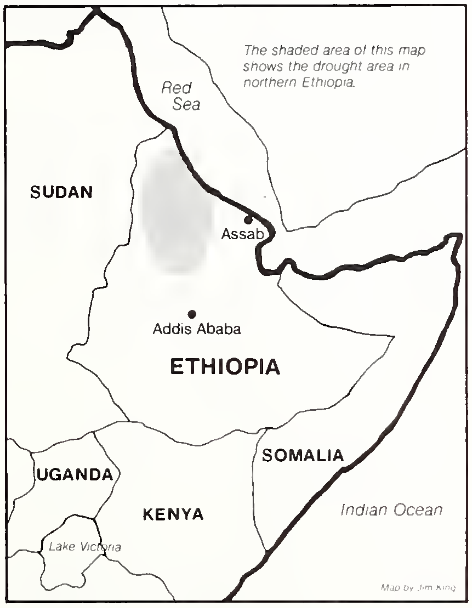
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia (MCC)—An estimated 3 million people living in northern Ethiopia are again struggling with drought. The farming families whose crops suffered last July and August when the rains did not come now watch as their livestock die of thirst and their meager food reserves dwindle. Some finally pack a few personal belongings on their backs and make the long trek to food distribution centers.

During the 1973-74 drought in Ethiopia an estimated 200,000 people died of starvation while the government hushed the seriousness of the disaster. This time, however, the Ethiopian government is working hard to provide food relief to the suffering. The government's Relief and Rehabilitation Commission has taken on the job of distributing food aid.

As a result of government appeals for help, there is sufficient grain in Ethiopia to feed the hungry for at least several months, and more boats wait in the harbor at Assab to unload more donated grain. But the cost and logistics of getting the grain to the isolated, drought-stricken countryside keeps the grain bottlenecked at the port or in major cities.

Nearly two of the 3 million who reside in the drought area live either in villages that are inaccessible by vehicle or within areas where there is fighting between resistance groups and the government. In these areas the RRC is unable to deliver food aid. There is no indication that the security situation in these conflictive areas will improve in the near future.

Mennonite Central Committee worker Phil Witmer, who recently visited the affected area, wrote that in a town in the province of Wollo the population more than doubled in three weeks when hungry peasants received news that food aid was available there. Some people reported walking days to reach the center.


The shaded area of this map shows the drought area in northern Ethiopia.

Map by Jim King

The Horn of Africa

Regarding the situation in two other drought-stricken provinces, Tigray and Eritrea, which are conflictive areas, Witmer comments, "Not much is known about the situation except that the people are also flocking to (distribution centers there)."

Witmer reports, "The great tragedy of this famine is that it has hit in an isolated and highly populated area, where the hilly and rugged terrain does not permit trucks to enter."

MCC has decided that at this time it will not ship further food aid to Ethiopia. The major problem that faces relief organizations is the distribution of the grains that are already in Ethiopia. MCC is sending Peter Crossman, former West Africa MCC disaster response coordinator, to visit the area and develop a concrete proposal for how MCC can help get the grain to the people.

Several suggestions that have been discussed are the possibility of providing transportation by donkey or even porters into the inaccessible areas. MCC will also be exploring the possibility of helping Ethiopian refugees who have crossed the border into Sudan to the west.

One serious consequence of the famine is the massive dislocation of farming families. Since food is not getting to the hungry, they leave their homes to get the food. Camps are sprouting near the distribution centers.

Witmer visited two such camps in the Gonder region. In one village he reported that the newcomers built little huts, the size of pup tents, using dead trees and bushes. Sickness, especially measles among the young, has affected the crowded camp dwellers. With the cold season ahead, the need for adequate shelter becomes even more acute. *Joy Hofer*

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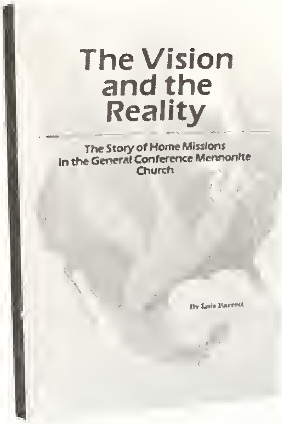

The Vision and the Reality

The Story of Home Missions in the General Conference Mennonite Church

by Lois Barrett

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The Niagra United Mennonite Church, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ont., held a series of lectures on family life March 25-27 with Bernie and Marge Wiebe as guest. The series included a message to young people on psychology and moral issues on Friday evening, an intergenerational emphasis at a Saturday breakfast, the issues of the elderly on Saturday afternoon, a banquet for young married couples on Saturday evening, plus the Sunday morning service.

A Christian education workshop held at the Eden Mennonite Church, Inola, Okla., on April 17 drew 29 registrants. Mary Helen Hardy, Eden junior superintendent, coordinated the day's activities, with Helen Coon, *Foundation Series* resource person for the Western District, bringing input for several sessions. Barry Jantz, Penny Tolson and Earl Cater also gave input. Daniel Janz serves as the Eden Sunday school superintendent.

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National Safety Sabbath, sponsored and coordinated by the National Safety Council's religious activities department, is an ecumenical celebration that brings worshipers of all faiths to a fuller understanding of safety. It will be observed Feb. 10-14, 1984. Interested congregations may receive a free kit by writing to the Religious Activities Department, National Safety Council, 444 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago, IL 60611.

At a trial in Denver federal court on May 9, Marge Roberts of Arvada (Colo.) Mennonite Church and Esther Kisamore were found guilty of trespass at the Rocky Flats Nuclear Weapons Plant near Denver. They had walked onto the property March 28 with the intention of planting a dogwood tree as a symbol of hope. On May 13 the judge sentenced Roberts to pay $1,000, collectible immediately, because of her previous record. Kisamore was fined $500, suspended, if she does not break the law for two years, since this was her first offense.

CPS #28 four-state reunion will be held at Nelson's Golden Glo, 66740 CR 103, Wakarusa, Ind., on Saturday, Sept. 10, at 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Cost is $6.25 per person. Send reservations by Aug. 27 to John H. Liechty, 408 High Park Ave., Goshen, IN 46526.

RECORD

MINISTERS

Robert C. Coon, pastor at Deer Creek (Okla.) Church, has completed 25 years in the pastoral ministry since his ordination.

Harlan deBrun was ordained May 22 at Silver Street Church, Goshen, Ind. He and his wife, Claire, were also commissioned for service in Lesotho with the Commission on Overseas Mission/Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission, beginning in August. They spent the past year at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Ind. He is a graduate of Gordon-Conwell Seminary and pastored a Baptist church for five years.

Robert L. Enns was ordained March 27 at Mayfair Church, Saskatoon, where he has served since 1981 as youth pastor.

George K. Epp, currently president of Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg, will become pastor at Douglas Church, Winnipeg, Aug. 1. He replaces *Franz Wiebe*, who has accepted a pastorate in Germany.

Ron Flaming has resigned as pastor of Southern Hills Church, Topeka, Kan., to become associate director of student services and director of counseling at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., beginning in August.

Bill Garrison resigned as pastor at United Church, Atwater, Calif., in February.

Norma Goertzen and *Thomas Finger*, both on the faculty of North Park Theological Seminary, Chicago, were licensed by the Central District and Illinois conferences for one year for specialized ministries at First Church of Oak Park, Ill., on May 9.

John Hess-Yoder became pastor of Peace Church, Portland, Ore., June 1. He and his wife, Beulah, recently returned from Mennonite Central Committee service in Brazil.

Coon

Bergen

Lubin Jantzen began serving as associate pastor at First Church, Newton, Kan., on May 15. He returned to the United States in March 1982 after 27 years of service in India.

Calvin King was installed as pastor at Koinonia Fellowship, Tempe, Ariz., April 24.

Lloyd Penner, pastor of Bethel Church, Fortuna, Mo., since November 1977, will resign Oct. 31. He and his wife, Helen, plan to retire in Corn, Okla.

Renee Sauder, who graduated from Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Ind., in May, will begin serving the Bethel College Church, North Newton, Kan., Aug. 15 as associate pastor.

Charles Stein will become pastor of First Church, Eyebrow, Sask., July 15. A teacher and principal in several Saskatchewan communities for 11 years, Stein is a graduate of the University of Saskatchewan and Canadian Mennonite Bible College.

James Wenger will become pastor of Mennonite Community Church, Fresno, Calif., in July. He formerly served at Shalom Fellowship, Tucson, Ariz.

Arthur Willms will become senior pastor of Olivet Church, Clearbrook, B.C., July 15. He is a graduate of Columbia Bible Institute, Clearbrook, and Mennonite Brethren Bible College, Winnipeg.

deBruns

WORKERS

Kathy Bergen, Coaldale (Alta.) Church, is beginning three years of Mennonite Central Committee service in West Bank, where she will work in community development. She has been a teacher in Winnipeg and has promoted community service. She is a graduate of Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg, the University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, and Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Ind. Her parents are Peter and Tina Bergen of Coaldale.

Jackie Buck, Bronx, N.Y., became assistant to the director of Mennonite Central Committee U.S.'s Urban Ministries office May 2. She will work with college and seminary students who will participate in MCC U.S.'s 1983 Urban Community Development Summer Service program.

Werner O. Packull joined the faculty of Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, Ont., May 1, as associate professor of history.

Thanks from India

I am regularly in receipt of *The Mennonite*. I am really grateful for it. I enjoy its contents. They are encouraging spiritually.

Further, I would like to intimate to you that I am still not aware of who is sending it for me, because so far I have not paid for it. I would therefore like to know the details of the person concerned who has arranged to deliver this beautiful magazine for me so that I may be able to express my thanks. *C. G. Singh, I.T.I. Korba, Bilaspur, MP, India*

May 16

Editor's note: I wrote to C. G. Singh of our special appeal for gifts toward foreign subscriptions. Your gifts make this ministry possible. This is only one of numerous letters expressing gratitude. I hope our readers will help us to continue this international sharing.

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We'll need to work hard

I'm very appreciative of your editorial, "God Brings Life into Being" (May 10 issue).

I've been thinking especially now about the abortion issue and maybe more about the right of a mother to keep her baby. I'm an MVS worker stationed here in the North of Howard unit's "pocket of poverty." Recently, in an art group we began principally for its therapeutic value with people who live at a home for the homeless, we talked with one 23-year-old woman who has touched us. Her special situation tugged at our heart strings. Theresa told us she has a 3-year-old daughter but she can't "talk about her." Now she's pregnant again and will no doubt have another baby she "can't talk about." No money, no home, no prospects, and there are many Theresas in this world that we are not reaching.

We've hoped that half of our "home for the homeless" could be dedicated to single mothers and babies. If we could only offer hope for their anguish. Always the need is for money to make dreams real. Getting people attuned to the people who long to help financially is a struggle.

"The issue of abortion will not go away unless we show people a better way." Amen to that statement. It really puts us all on the thinking trail. How can we do such a tremendous task? With God's help, of course.

Life is the greatest gift God has given us. Sadly, sometimes it seems not so to some. You say, "We must hold life holy, so deliberate abortion diminishes as an acceptable choice." It's true. And the more love we can show to those whose need is so great on a one-to-one basis, the better chances they will have. But it's going to take us all making this kind of effort, and we'll have to seek them out.

Next year, we hope, two MVS workers will be assigned here to pick up the pieces of lives in turmoil. I'm continuing on, so grateful to be in a position of this kind, praying for insight and all kinds of material help.

Thanks for the editorial and *The Mennonite*. *Gwen Norton, 7712 N. Paulina, Chicago, IL 60626*

May 19

Life also after birth

Thank you for "My Life Is a Gift from God" and "God Brings Life into Being" (May 10 issue). Both pieces were special to me, and I wish more people could read them.

I was prompted to write by your editorial, which to me suggested that there is no simple solution to an unplanned pregnancy. I agree. As a social worker at an adoption agency, I have counseled many girls and women with unplanned pregnancies. (The expectant fathers are also counseled if they are available.) Since most of these women are at least in their second trimester of pregnancy when I meet them, abortion seldom comes up for their consideration. One point I'd like to make is that when parenting one's expected child is not a good option, adoption is also not the simple solution it is often purported to be. The surrendering of a child for adoption is almost always a heart-wrenching experience. In some cases, adoption is not even possible, as in situations where biological parents do not agree about the course of action to be taken.

I also question the sincerity of some "right to life" groups, although possibly for some different reasons than those implied in the editorial. I believe that concern for the human rights of children should not end with their right to be born. What about the quality of life? I wonder why there are not more right-to-life advocates eager to adopt or foster parent older children needing homes because their biological parents could not parent them properly. In Illinois, Public Aid will not pay for an abortion except to save the mother's life. Recently, medical and nutritional assistance available to poor women and children has been reduced to the point of seriously endangering the health of these children both before and after birth. I wonder why so few right-to-life advocates are working hard to correct this. Have they forgotten those children whose lives they worked to protect?

Unplanned pregnancy often results in many other needs, including temporary housing, continuing education for school-age girls, parent education and emotional support for overwhelmed parents. I wonder why right-to-life advocates are not more involved in providing for these needs. Those who think such needs do not exist in rural communities should know that many pregnant women from rural areas travel to metropolitan areas to get services they need.

LETTERS

Life is indeed a gift from God. If we truly believe this, I think our least responsibility is to see that pregnant women and children receive the food and care they need to give children a decent start in life. I would like to challenge Mennonites to greater action in this area. *Barbra Gant, 2726 N. Wilton, Chicago, IL 60614*

May 25

Wanting the unwanted

Since there are five adopted members in three families of our tribe, I would like to pass along this story I found in a religious booklet.

A professor posed this problem to his class: "A certain man has syphilis, and his wife has tuberculosis. Of their four children, one has died and the other three suffer from an incurable disease that is considered terminal. The mother is pregnant. What do you recommend?"

Most students recommended abortion.

"Fine," replied the teacher, "*you just killed Beethoven*."

That makes me wonder if Beethoven ever wished he had never been born.

What happiness those five infants brought to their adopting parents in our tribe.

The illegitimate child who is the most unwanted child on earth to the natural parents is the most wanted child to the mother who can't have children of her own.

C. T. Studd, the famous sportsman who became the prince of missionaries, loved these four lines: "Some want to work within the sound of church or chapel bells. I want to run a rescue ship *within a yard of hell*."

I read that there are 20 kinds of Mennonites and 66 kinds of Baptists. Would you please list the 20 kinds of Mennonites? *Mrs. Mavis Bestvater, Route 2, Box 56, Peabody, KS 66866*

May 26

Editor's note: I don't think 20 covers all the groups in Canada and the United States. Here are those that come to my mind offhand: Zion Mennonite Church (small group here in Manitoba), Sommerfelder, Chortitzer, Old Colony, Evangelical (EMC), Evangelical Mission (EMMC), Mennonite Brethren, Evangelical Mennonite Brethren, General Conference Mennonites (CMC in Canada, GC in the United States and Canada), Mennonite Church (MC or "OM"), Old Order Amish, Amish Mennonite, Beachy Amish, Church of God in Christ Mennonite, Conservative Mennonite, Reinlaender, Brethren in Christ, Reformed Mennonites, Old Order River Brethren, Blumenorter, Whitewater, Hutterian Brethren (how related?).

Some of the small groups are very closely related one to the other, some are related closely to larger groups, and some might be judged "non-Mennonite." But there are over 20 varieties of identifiable Mennonite groups. I don't consider that necessarily negative, especially when we can do different services for the Lord. It does become negative when we work self-righteously as if one group has the whole truth and the others are untrue to the gospel.

Correct news report

I want to correct the unwarranted conclusion of the news article covering the Eastern District Conference (May 24 issue). The charge is made that the challenges of Myron Augsburger's messages were largely ignored in the discussion of inclusive language and women's ordination. A quote from Jerry O'Connell is then given to support this charge.

But O'Connell's quote proves the opposite, in that it directly takes up the challenges given by Augsburger. It seems that the reporter assumes that women's ordination is biblical and that to take the position that women's ordination is not biblical is to ignore the challenge of those who support it, as does Augsburger. But Augsburger's comments were not convincing, and the format of the program did not provide for opportunity to question him. But this is hardly ignoring his message. *Stephen C. Strunk, Bowmansville, PA 17507*

June 1

Editor's note: Sorry if my writing was so vague, Stephen. My intent was to quote Jerry verbatim to show why Augsburger's comments were not picked up on more than they were. I thought—and to me this reflected mature discretion—Jerry was saying that before integrating Augsburger's comments, time was needed for thinking and further discussion. That's a compliment and agrees with your assessment, as I see it.

Stephen, does your comment reflect our serious problems when discussing issues on which there are differences? You suggest I assume women's ordination to be biblical. I confess that I have not yet made up my mind on that issue. What does God mean by creating us male and female? There are differences.

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Church of the Way struggles along

Amy Rinner Dueckman

The village of Granisle, B.C., lies in a remote area in the center of the province, 90 miles southeast of the city of Smithers, 200 miles northwest of Prince George. The number of police officers—and the number of pianos—in the village can be counted on one hand. Snow stays on the ground from around Halloween until long after those further south are tending to shoots in their gardens, and in the middle of winter, daylight lasts only seven hours a day.

For Granislers, bagging a moose for meat for the winter is not unusual, and many residents try to get a supply of moose meat if they can. Other supplies—groceries, household goods, clothing—must be stocked up in bulk while the shopper is in a larger town, since merchandise is scarce in Granisle.

On the shores of Lake Babine, the largest natural freshwater lake in British Columbia, Granisle was incorporated as a copper mining town in 1971. Mining is the sole reason for its existence, and mine shutdown is now the reason for its 40 percent decline in population from 2,000 at its peak to the present 1,200. When the mines are at their economic best, the town never sleeps; men are working there 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Now the hotel, gas station and other businesses have had to close, and the bank comes to town only once a week. Life has come to a standstill for most of the population of Granisle.

It takes a special kind of person to minister spiritually to people in the midst of such potentially depressing circumstances. Dietrich (Dick) Hildebrandt has been trying to do just that for two years as pastor of the Granisle Church of the Way, a mission church supported by the Conference of Mennonites in British Columbia.

Started as a mission church, an outgrowth of the First Mennonite congregation in nearby Burns Lake in the early 1970s, today the Church of the Way has its own mission in its own community. It is the only permanent house of worship in the village. Present membership is 24, but attendance is about 40 each Sunday for worship and 30 for Sunday school; both are seen as an outreach to the community.

For example, the church sends a bulletin and tract home with Sunday school children's weekly take-home papers to reach non-Christian parents. Services and activities are publicized in the local newspaper and through flyers distributed in post office boxes. Such advertising brought in good attendance for the popular James Dobson "Focus on the Family" films last year.

Why then don't more of the villagers attend church regularly? "Many come here to lose themselves," explains Hildebrandt. "They may have had a church background, but here they can be 'nobody' without being squeezed into what others expect of them.

"In times of crisis they will certainly call, though; most folks in town know me as the pastor. Funerals give me a chance to preach to the living. And at weddings I have the chance to share God's plan for marriage."

For Dick Hildebrandt, a career in the ministry has been a relatively recent development. A businessman by profession, he and his wife, Margaret, came to Granisle to fill the city administrator position in 1978 and found fellowship at the Church of the Way, then pastored by George Born.

During this time the struggling young church began a building program, having previously met in a small trailer house shared with other denominations. Construction was started in 1978 with a loan from the Conference of Mennonites in Canada and underwritten by the Conference of Mennonites in British Columbia. The local Noranda Mine Company donated the land.

"The experience of building was good for the group," Dick remembers. "It built a strong bond." The church building was dedicated in October 1979—a small but cozy structure with a rustic log-cabin atmosphere lent by its wooden-beam construction.

The Hildebrandts left in 1980 to pursue other business opportunities in Calgary, but their stay away was brief. The call to the Granisle pastorate came

Pastor Dick Hildebrandt attends to business in his church's study.

Located on Lake Babine, Granisle is heavily dependent on the mining industry.

that same fall upon the resignation of George Born. Jake Tilitzky, then B.C. conference minister, called Dick and asked him to consider returning to Granisle—this time as pastor of the small church where the Hildebrandts had earlier worshiped. It didn't take long to decide.

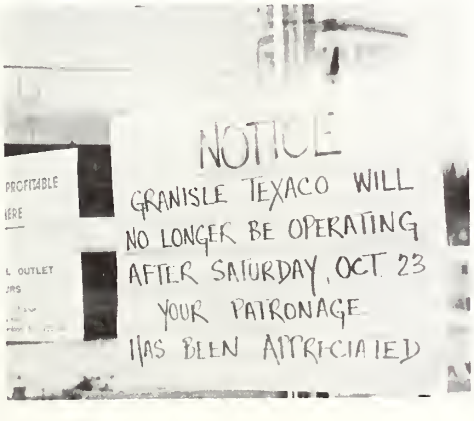
"Coming back was easy," says Dick. "Maybe the Lord called us here the first time to get us acquainted." He and Margaret had already been sold on the crisp, clean air, the natural beauty of the area, even the five-foot snows and the -30-degree winter temperatures, though they acknowledge "it's not for everybody." They accepted the call and moved back to the village in January 1981; Dick was ordained as pastor of the Church of the Way in March of the same year.

Hildebrandt faces some situations not common to other Mennonite ministers. His church doesn't bear the name "Mennonite," and his parishioners don't think of themselves as Mennonites. The congregation uses Sunday school materials and hymnbooks issued by other denominations and practices baptism by immersion because of its wider familiar ity among those from various backgrounds in the church.

Also, church members have difficulty understanding relationships to the larger conference body. Delegates attending the Conference of Mennonites in British Columbia have been overwhelmed at the scope of the programs and organization of the proceedings—the feeling of working together with so many other churches and people all over British Columbia—not to mention all across Canada and the United States. Many had no idea they were part of such a broad-based group, according to Dick.

"It's important for the conference to be visible and for the conference minister to visit here periodically to show people that there are those who care about them way up in Granisle. They are not alone."

Unemployment here runs near 100 percent.



The church's ups and downs cannot help but be tied in with those of the village. Several years ago Granisle supported two profitable copper mines, the highest-paying in the province, across Lake Babine. The older of the two, Granisle Mine, thrived until depressed copper prices shut it down and sent its workers to the other, Bell Mine. Last October Bell also announced its closure. Now its employees are waiting with uncertainty but hoping the mine will reopen in summer.

"Most people are trying to winter it through on unemployment insurance," says Hildebrandt. "If they don't have high personal bills, they'll try to make it. There's nowhere else to go. But if the mine doesn't reopen, they'll have to look for jobs . . . a family here, a family there." Already the exodus trend has made its impression on the congregation: 10 of the church's members are non-resident, and only seven of those remaining are full-time wage earners.

With attendance fluctuating as it does and the economic future of Granisle so uncertain, the Church of the Way must continue as a mission church subsidized by the B.C. conference. It has not joined the Conference of Mennonites in Canada because the small church could not pull its share of the weight to support the conference. "We're still basically a missionary church; we'll never be a self-supporting congregation as far as I can see." For 1983 the Conference of Mennonites in British Columbia has budgeted to support the Granisle church by $24,000 and to support it in prayer.

"Right now, the uncertainty of the situation is with all of us," says Dick, "but fortunately things aren't happening all at once. Granisle isn't a dying town, it's just 'sick' right now. Our spirit is good and solid and we're an encouragement to each other. Our people are a strength—and so is our church building."

And though he'd be too modest to admit it, administrator-turned-pastor Dick Hildebrandt is also a strength, helping those at the Church of the Way maintain a sense of unity and hope in the community despite the seeming hopelessness of its economy.

For now, Hildebrandt is content to continue his ministry in Granisle because of the great need there. "Many say the church is their only reason for staying," he concluded. "For a number, this is the first church they've attended where there is a resident pastor. And that, for them, is a gold mine."

More than counseling

The Church and Persons with Handicaps, *by H. Oliver Ohsberg (Herald Press, 1982, 123 pages)*

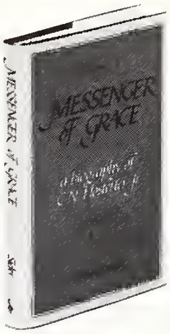
Reviewed by Barbara J. Wiens, 14 Lorne Ave., Leamington, ON N8H 2H7

I applaud Oliver Ohsberg in his "attempt to arouse the conscience of the church regarding ministry to persons with disabilities" (p. 10). But when he "attempts to suggest some guidelines to those in the local church who feel the burden to begin a ministry to the disabled and their families" (p. 10), the term "burden" must be qualified. It can mean care or responsibility, or it can mean encumbrance or oppressive obligation. The latter definition is not Ohsberg's overall intent. Furthermore, the author places too much emphasis on counseling the disabled, their families and those who would minister to them, but not enough on other church members. The church is the people, all of whom need educating in their thinking on disabilities for there to be a viable system.

While Ohsberg discusses a few genuine matters concerning the disabled, I do not agree with Dean Bartel, who writes in the foreword that the author "presents a clear and concise understanding of what it means to have a handicap" (pp. 11-12). Such an understanding can only come firsthand. But his statement brings out one point that Ohsberg stresses, though not as clearly and consistently as he could. I have found that the disabled dislike being labeled handicapped. They look on society as handicapped because it treats the disabled as different. Ohsberg indicates that the disabled can be made to feel " 'handicapped' . . . by the attitude of society" (p. 35) because they see the disability and not the person.

Since Ohsberg is more familiar with the task of counseling, he might have considered a different title, like *Spiritual Counseling for the Disabled.* The present title is too broad in respect to the contents. The author has not dealt with the church as the people but as the Word. The church's ministry encompasses much more than counseling. It must also be remembered that a person being disabled does not presuppose that counseling is necessary. Acceptance is much better and sometimes a more complex achievement. In ministering to the disabled one must decide whether the disability or the person is the concern.

H. Oliver Ohsberg



For the most part the author's wording is easy to follow. Occasionally he uses terms that need explanation, such as psychopathological, which refers to mental disorder, and congenital anomaly, which means a bodily irregularity present from birth.

Ohsberg's fundamental message can be summarized as follows: "The ultimate goal for the church's ministry to persons with disabilities is not different from its goals for ministry to every person. We desire for each person to take one's place in society as a reasonably independent individual, to be reasonably happy in that place, and to attain the fullness of one's potential as a child of God" (p. 20). The church needs to hear this message.

A model church leader

Messenger of Grace: a Biography of C. N. Hostetter, Jr., *by E. Morris Sider (Evangel Press, 1982, 272 pages)*

Reviewed by Helmut Harder, professor of theology, Canadian Mennonite Bible College, 600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, MB R3P 0M4

C. N. Hostetter, Jr. (1899-1980) was a prominent leader in the Brethren in Christ Church and beyond its circles for many years. He is best known as president of Messiah College from 1934-1960 and as chairman of Mennonite Central Committee from 1953-1967.

The book is well-written and enriched by a section of photographs. The documentation and attention to detail shows that Sider has done careful research and has organized and formulated his findings with great care. One striking feature, though, is the extent to which Hostetter's life is depicted in relation to institutions. We're left wondering about his family life, his human side.

Messenger of Grace provides worthwhile reading for a number of reasons. First and foremost, Hostetter's life story contributes significantly to our awareness and understanding of a significant chapter in church history. Second, Hostetter's dedication to Christ and the church provides immediate inspiration for our ongoing spiritual pilgrimage. Third, Hostetter provides a model of church leadership. One is impressed by the rich combination of characteristics that formed the dynamic center for his thought and activity: a rigorous Christian conviction combined with a graciousness toward those who do not stand quite at the center as he understands it, a deep personal devotion balanced by dedication to a relational expression of faith, intense involvement in revival meetings and in issues of social justice at the same time and a spirit of humility combined with a sense of pride in personal accomplishments. At a time when many church groups are struggling to reformulate their conception of leadership, we do well to glean clues from the Hostetters of the recent past.

Prayers for children

Prayers to Grow By, *by Mary Batchelor (Christian Herald Books, 1979, 90 pages)*

Reviewed by Helen Baergen, 3401 Brook Road, Richmond, VA 23227

This is not a how-to book. It is simply a book of prayers, over 200 of them, to be read to and by children. Mary Batchelor has grouped the prayers around themes like "Coming and Going," "All the Countries of the World," "When We Are Frightened" and "Prayers of Jesus."

Each section is based on a Bible verse and includes common two-liners, prayers from other countries and some of the great Christian prayers of other ages. Gillian Gaze's black and white sketches and the full-color photographs of children around the world form an integral, captivating part of the book.

I am particularly impressed with the universality of this book. In a sensitive and effective arrangement, the prayers and photos bring that other hard and often hungry world to our North American families. Perhaps these can help us with our children to turn from our anxieties and preoccupations to the acknowledgment of God's sovereignty. "Lord, how glad we are that we don't hold you but that you hold us" (Prayer from Haiti, p. 25).

MEDITATION

God is with us

"Mommy, what is God trying to tell us?" was my 12-year-old daughter's question to me recently. "Is he punishing us because we've done something bad?"

Several things had happened recently that caused us all to stop and think.

One evening Hardy and I were driving down the road when we felt our car strain, shudder and almost turn over. What happened? A thick telephone cable, hanging loosely from a pole and draped across the road, wrapped itself around our right front wheel. The car came to a stop at a crazy angle, partly suspended by the cable. We backed up slowly, and two fellows helped us unwind the cable.

A few days later, after an exceptionally hot day, we had a severe lightning storm. About 10 p.m., as we were getting ready for bed, there was a loud crack of lightning. We soon noticed an acrid smell of burning wires. Investigating, we saw smoke curling from our hot water heater. When we opened the panel, the heater was full of flames.

My answer to Christine's question was that in both instances God had been there as our helper rather than as the instigator of the troubles. Satan is also active in the world, trying to make us afraid, trying to turn us away from God. The best thing to do when troubles seem to surge around us and overwhelm us is to cling to God. He is there in the midst of every problem. We thanked God that our car didn't turn over and that our water heater wasn't struck when we were all asleep.

The lightning storm also struck down one of our Zairian Christians. His children ran to get the neighbors, and soon the house was filled with people singing and praying. The man lay prone on the floor as if dead. Several people began to work with him, exercising his limbs and giving artificial respiration. All at once he opened his eyes and said to his neighbor, "Mubolo, always stay close to Jesus." Later, after he recovered fully, he kept telling people to be prepared to meet Jesus anytime.

Hardy and one of our Mennonite Brethren seminary students have been reviewing the Book of Job in Kituba. Last Sunday he and Hardy led the worship service in one of our local churches. Pashi preached the sermon, and Hardy was thrilled at the application he made—straight from the Book of Job and so African and relevant to the situation here in Zaire. He related how Job's friends tried to convince Job that it was because of his sins that all those bad things were happening to him. Were they correct in their assumption? No, the Bible tells us Job was a good and upright man. Then came the clincher. He asked the congregation, "What do our elders, our friends and relatives say to us when everything goes wrong?" They all knew the answer to that one—"Someone has cast an evil spell on you, someone wants to harm you." Pashi then asked them, "Should we be listening to what people around us say? Is that the kind of wisdom and advice we need? Let's stay close to God, no matter what happens to us, the way Job did. Let God tell us what we need to hear."

"God is our shelter and strength, always ready to help in times of trouble" (Psalm 46:1). "The Lord Almighty is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge" (Psalm 46:7).

Elfrieda Schroeder

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Prayer is worship is communion is communication is the pulsebeat of our Christian faith and life. New Christians are prepared for the results of prayer. Too often we dabble in prayer as a series of "gimmes" and a few utterances of praise. The Bible assures us that "prayer . . . has great power in its effects" (James 5:16b).

God wants to teach us more about prayer prior to our going to Bethlehem '83. Let's learn from his Spirit.

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EDITORIAL

The business of Bethlehem

Bethlehem '83, the joint Mennonite Church General Assembly and General Conference Mennonite Church Triennial Sessions, will take place in less than six weeks. As report booklets begin circulating, it's time to look beyond the convention's historic, celebrative and symbolic importance to some of the business at hand.

Tax withholding. At a special midtriennium conference in Minneapolis in 1979, GC delegates voted 1,218 to 134 in favor of urging their General Board to "use all legal, legislative and administrative avenues for achieving a conscientious objector exemption from the legal requirement that the conference withhold income taxes from the wages of its employees." If no solution could be found within three years, the GB was to bring the matter back for further action. At Estes Park in 1980, a judicial test case on the issue was okayed by a vote of 1,156 to 353.

Bethlehem '83 will bring GC delegates face to face with the fact that all three avenues, at present, look like dead ends. As a result, the GB is proposing that the conference stop withholding taxes from salaries of employees who request such action in order to "assert the higher claim of Christ's law of love."

If approved, the resolution would take the conference one small but significant step into the sphere of divine obedience/civil disobedience. It could become the most formidable—and challenging—business item for GCs, despite the fact that several other organizations have already taken the same action.

Human sexuality. After Estes Park delegates sent a provisional statement on homosexuality back to the drawing board in 1980 and MCs authorized a study on sexuality at Bowling Green, Ohio, the following year, a joint committee was formed to assemble a statement for both denominations. After a year and a half of work, the committee has drafted a 13,000-word, yet remarkably readable, theological paper to serve as the first half of a larger document titled "Human Sexuality and the Christian Life."

This first part, called "What the Bible Says About Sexuality," will be presented to Bethlehem's joint business sessions; however, delegates will discuss the statement during denominational sessions. No other official action will be taken. Acceptance of the study will await the second part's completion in time for the next round of churchwide meetings in 1985 and '86.

Justice. Like the sexuality study, *Justice and the Christian Witness* is a joint MC/GC report and will be presented to the joint sessions but acted upon separately. In circulation for just over a year, the study guide has seen only moderate congregational use. If endorsed by delegates, it will continue to be an important resource on this subject for years to come.

Inter-Mennonite cooperation. Uppermost on the minds of many Bethlehem '83 delegates will be the impact of the joint convention on inter-Mennonite relationships for the next decade. Partially to head off a rash of resolutions which might carry a host of different intentions, the MC and GC General Boards have prepared a "Statement on Inter-Mennonite Cooperation in North America" to be brought before the joint delegate body. Briefly, the paper affirms inter-Mennonite structures, programs and conferences as well as dually-affiliated congregations. It expresses "thanks for the ways in which God's Spirit is bringing Mennonites together," while committing both churches to seek additional avenues of cooperation at the area, national and binational levels. And it makes a commitment "to meet again as we have done here at Bethlehem," while in the meantime supporting "similar types of Mennonite meetings."

For some the statement will represent hasty movement toward unity; for others it will not go far enough.

The challenge for GCs. All four major business items will no doubt see the diverse elements within the General Conference rise to the surface again. Although amendments are likely to be made on the conference floor, some version of the inter-Mennonite cooperation statement will surely be adopted. On the other hand, issues like tax withholding and the human sexuality study could easily see debate which will be difficult, even polarized.

The challenge for GC delegates at Bethlehem '83 will be to maintain a measure of intradenominational unity equal to or exceeding the level of inter-Mennonite harmony they hope to achieve by the convention's end.
Larry Cornies

THE MENNONITE

OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST

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IN YOUR LIFE YOU MUST BE SO CONVERTED AND CHANGED THAT YOU BECOME NEW PEOPLE IN CHRIST, SO THAT CHRIST IS IN YOU AND YOU ARE IN CHRIST" (Menno Simons, 1537).

Lavonne

New life in Christ—in Anabaptist perspective

Cornelius J. Dyck

The Anabaptists of the 16th century spoke with many voices. They said different things in different settings; so much so that some think we cannot speak of a common core of Anabaptist faith at all. This is not correct. Most of them—most of the time, in most places—held to specific doctrines which together formed the basic elements of their faith. Convictions about new life in Christ were at the heart of this faith.

Sin. They believed in the fall and in the historical reality of original sin. They did not believe in (Augustinian) total depravity, though Menno comes close to this with his constant emphasis on his own unworthiness: "According to my natural birth I am nothing but unclean slime and dust of the earth, conceived and born in sin from my mother's womb. . . ." The cause of the fall is in the will, not the flesh. The flesh, Hubmaier said, was destroyed in the fall and must perish; the soul was damaged and is restored upright as the image of God in humankind.

Hubmaier spoke for most Anabaptists when he said that the Second Adam (Christ) had by his obedience restored what had been destroyed by the disobedience of the first Adam and even more. Since Christ, people have the capacity to be sensitive to good and evil in a way not possible before the fall. Therefore, Hubmaier believed, it was better to be in the church of Christ than to have been in paradise.

Most Anabaptists believed that original sin is not part of the essence of humanity. The fall corrupted but did not destroy human nature. They distinguished between the consequences of the fall and personal guilt. All suffer death as the judgment of God on the disobedience of the human race. Even children die. But they do not die because of their own sinfulness. Children are the natural children of God; they have not fallen into disgrace because their *will* has not rebelled against their Creator. God does not create little children only to prepare them for hell. They are born free from *active* sin and guilt by virtue of

"Through the new birth the believer is joined to Christ, so implanted in him and into his heavenly nature that this new life is completely changed and, with it, its fruit."

the atonement. The evil inclination is there but is not counted against them for Christ's sake until it is expressed in deliberate wrong choices in the mature person.

Freedom. The human will can choose between good and evil, the Anabaptists believed, but its choices are prone to evil until it has been restored through Christ. This freedom is then under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. In Christ believers live by the love which the Spirit pours into their life, creating an eagerness to do the will of God. So historically, sin is a part of the human condition—with freedom lost—but existentially it is an act of will, a rebellion against God in the freedom which God restored in the Second Adam.

Grace. For most Anabaptists, but particularly for Pilgram Marpeck and Hubmaier, grace is understood on two levels—the natural knowledge or conscience by which people know right from wrong, and the level of regeneration. In no case is grace a "thing"—as the wafer was in the Mass—but God coming to the believer in Spirit and power. Grace is never separated from the coming of Christ as Savior and Lord.

Regeneration is an inclusive term describing both repentance and conversion, and is the continuing process whereby the grace of God works an actual transformation in the nature of the believer. Forensic grace—the declaration of divine justification of the sinner without the sinner's response in declared obedience—said Hubmaier, makes carnal Christians instead of cross-bearing Christians. People are not only pronounced righteous but grow in righteousness under the tutelage of the Holy Spirit.

Repentance. The beginning of regeneration or salvation is not a confession of sinfulness, Menno said against Luther, but repentance. Word and deed belong together. And Menno added, "But if you wish to be saved, by all means and first of all, your earthly, carnal, ungodly life must be reformed. For it is naught but true repentance that Scripture teaches . . . if you do not repent there is nothing in heaven or on earth that can help you. . . . We must be born from above and renewed in our hearts. . . . Wherever true repentance and the new creature are not, there man must be eternally lost."

This is clearly a "faith and obedience" rather than an "only believe" approach. Conversion means to turn around and start on a new way. It is repentance—the beginning—not the end of faith. Menno's co-worker Dirk Philips wrote, "No one can be born again or spiritually quickened, and no one can believe the gospel except he first sincerely repent, as the Lord Jesus Christ himself testifies (Matthew 3:2), for he taught the people repentance first of all and then faith, and so he also commanded his apostles to do."

Law. Repentance is not joyful trust, as Luther described it, but fear and remorse which alone are the beginning of the Christian life. Fear, said Menno, "is the pawn which expels, buries, crushes, slays and destroys the sins of believers and is the first part of true repentance." This fear is produced by the law. To preach faith first without repentance or to preach the gospel without law—is a false faith, attractive only for those who walk "on the broad way."

Preaching the law is a necessary first step to conversion. It brings a knowledge of sin and drives to Christ, the true physician (Marpeck). Because of this emphasis on the law and obedience, the reformers often accused the Anabaptists of works righteousness. But they replied that feeding the hungry and clothing the naked was not works righteousness. Menno wrote, "How miserably the priests have had us poor people by the nose. . . . God be praised, we caught on that all of their works avail nothing, but that the blood and death of Christ alone must cancel and pay for our sins. They strike up a psalm . . . while beer and wine verily runs from their drunken mouths and noses. . . . If someone steps up in true and sincere love to admonish . . . and point them to Jesus Christ rightly . . . then he must hear from that hour that he is one who believes in salvation by good works. . . ."

Holiness. The Strasbourg reformer Martin Bucer wrote about the Anabaptists, "Their most pointed argument is always this, that we keep house so badly; with this argument they lead astray many people. God help us, so that one day we may be able to take their argument away from them, yes, from our conscience and from the Lord our God. . . ." At another time he wrote, "The magistrates are rather coarse and carnal men, and the preachers are very neglectful; many of them frequently get drunk. . . . The plain man cannot bring himself to recognize the Church of Christ among such wild persons. . . ." No wonder then that Menno wrote, "Those who pose as pastors are thieves and murderers of our souls."

It is against this background that the Anabaptist emphasis upon holiness must be seen. Only God is holy. Menno felt himself earthbound: "(Our) inward and outward war is without ceasing. (Our) struggle is against the devil, world and flesh all (our) days. . . ." But he also lists many pages of joyful fruit of regeneration and grace. This grace enables and works a change in people whereby the lost image of God is restored.

A divine power enters the human heart and life, making it possible to live in a totally new way—in fact, to become a new person.

Dirk Philips said this most clearly when he wrote, "Now although persons become participants in the divine nature . . . they do not become in being and person what God and Christ alone are. Oh no! The creature will never become the Creator, and the flesh will never become eternal spirit . . . but the believers become gods and children of the most high through the new birth, the impartation and fellowship of the divine nature . . . they will be taken up into glory even as God is in glory. But men are and remain there as creatures, and God alone Creator and Ruler."

Menno used the analogy of the vine and the branches. Through the new birth the believer is joined to Christ, so implanted in him and into his heavenly nature that this new life is completely changed and, with it, its fruit. "For all who are in Christ are new creatures, flesh of his flesh, bone of his bone, and members of his body."

Thus in their understanding of both sin and grace the Anabaptists affirmed the possibility of holiness, the call to holiness and the command to holiness. Since Christ, sin was no longer a disease for which there was no cure. The Spirit would always bring fruit in the lives of the faithful. Yet few Anabaptists moved on to teach sinlessness. They were too conscious of the ethical expectations of a righteous and holy God. Sinlessness belonged to him alone. •

Mennonite boundaries lowered, nuclei reinforced (1876-present)

In 1867 John F. Funk moved his publishing business from Chicago to Elkhart, Ind. Five years later the nearby Yellow Creek Mennonite community began to fracture with the withdrawal of Jacob Wisler and the beginnings of the Old Order Mennonite movement. Two years later, in 1874, the same community begat the Daniel Brenneman schism that united with Solomon Eby of Ontario to form what finally became the United Missionary Church, a movement in the other direction. In the same year, the first Russian Mennonites began arriving in the United States and Canada. The 18,000 in the next six years constitute the largest Mennonite migration of the 19th century.

This cluster of events signaled the beginning of the third century of Mennonites in the United States and Canada and pointed to the developing diversity in the Mennonite world.

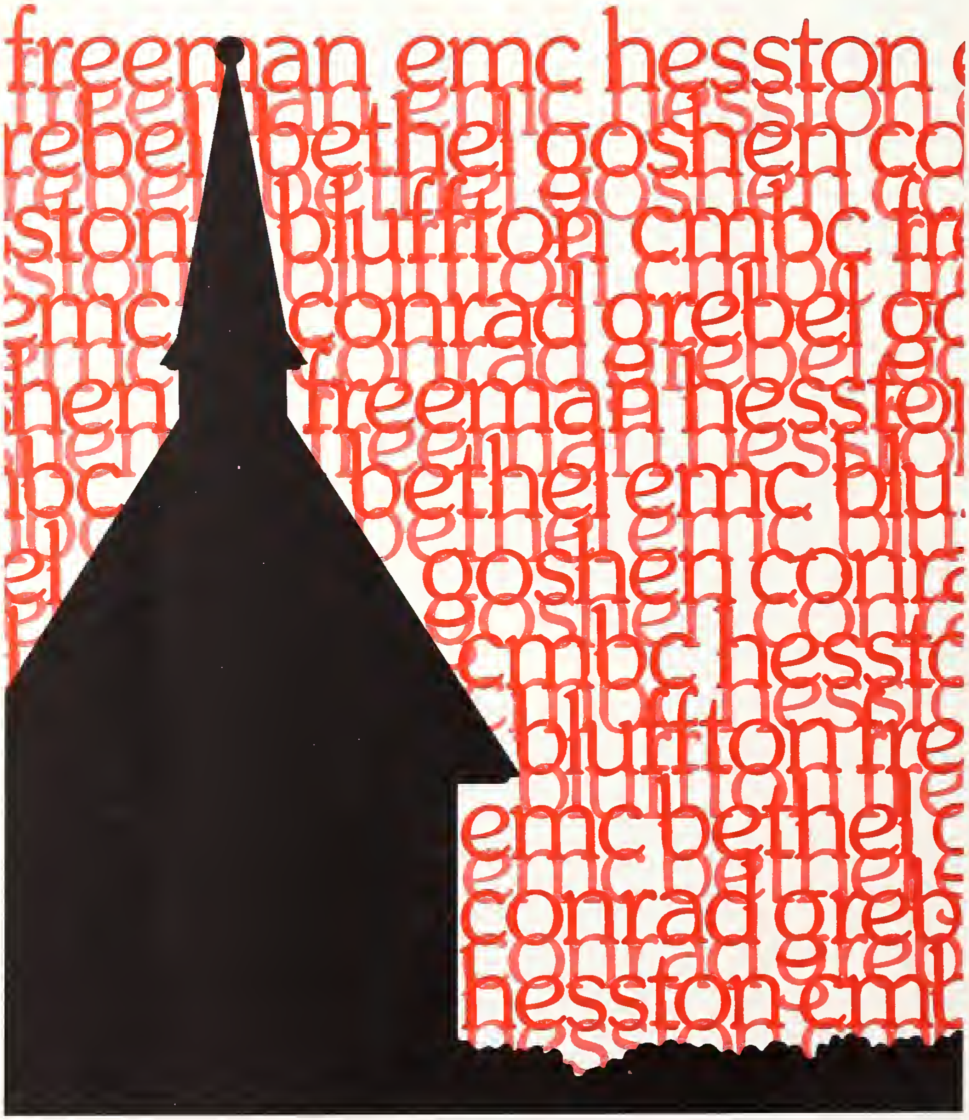
Mennonites at mid-19th century were largely on the margins of American society. Rural isolation, village society, the cultural withdrawal following the American Revolutionary War and the ethic of separation created a barrier in which time-honored faiths and traditions were passed on. There were exceptions, yet for most Mennonites, like most Canadians and Americans, small village life was formative. Village society was like a loosely connected series of islands with exchanges of news and goods but still managing to retain a sense of independence. Intruding into this world came the industrial and urban revolutions, the new migrations and the emergence of national cultures.

The coming of modernity fractured the small Mennonite world. The fracturing had begun already in the 1840s with Jacob Stauffer and John Oberholtzer, progressives in eastern Pennsylvania, and Daniel Hoch, an innovative leader in Ontario. It accelerated and appeared again in the 1920s. Both the "new" and "old" Mennonites were responding to the encroachments of the larger society. They responded differently to the pressures for cultural conformity. The new or progressives felt elements of the larger society could infuse the Mennonite imagination with greater vitality. The old or conservatives protested that infusion from the outside meant the introduction of alien elements.

The conservative Mennonites remained on the margins of U.S. and Canadian society. Groups that came to be known as Old Order Amish, Old Order Mennonite and Old Colony wished to keep on with the tradition of separation. They retained forms of worship, patterns of church life, modes of dress, styles of discipline and authority, uses of technology and visions of an organic community that would insure their separateness from society. They wished to continue as much as possible the inherited ways of their forebears.

The progressives assumed that Mennonite faith and peoplehood could exist not only on the margins of society, but also at the center. One of the dominant themes of the last century of North American Mennonite history is the movement of progressives toward the center. Many Mennonites today are participants in the central cultural, economic, political and educational structures of Canada and the United States. We live in the cosmopolitan centers and in the villages. We mingle

Institutions were one way that Mennonite progressive groups tried to revitalize their nuclei.



freely and unnoticeably in airports, theaters, civic organizations, shopping centers and brokerage firms. We were largely a farming people but today we are scattered through the labor force and the professions.

Progressive Mennonites in Canada and the United States have not moved at the same pace toward participation in the mainstream culture. Some had more clearly developed theologies and traditions to modulate the entry rate. Those who came earlier (Swiss) generally moved more slowly than those who came later (Dutch, Russian). Mennonite immigrants into Canada (1920s and 1940s) moved into the national culture more quickly than previous immigrant generations. Peoples whose history was in a pluralist context developed more elaborate systems for separating themselves from the surrounding culture than those who had lived among their own kind. But for all who have accepted the urban and industrial revolution, the movement from the margins to the center has come.

Ethno-religious traditions may be thought of as having both boundaries and nuclei, or organizing centers. Mennonites staying on the margins of U.S. and Canadian society retained identity and preservation through continual boundary maintenance. Those who moved toward the center sought preservation through a revitalization of the nuclei. Modernity renders the boundaries more permeable (open); thus religious groups either renew their efforts to strengthen the boundaries or relocate their sources of identity. The distinction between groups interested in boundary maintenance and those emphasizing nuclei revitalization does not imply that the former are not interested in strong nuclei, or that the latter are not interested in boundaries. It does presume a differing survival strategy.

The revitalization of the progressive Mennonite nuclei took three successive, overlapping and continual forms: institutional, ideological and ecumenical. The new identity for the progressives was related to new forms of institutional activity, new theological statements and new inter-Mennonite alliances.

The third century has seen Mennonites range from those who resist evidence of "modernism" to the point of maintaining traditional farming patterns to those who have adapted into the modern technological world to the point of being almost impossible to identify them as a separate group.

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It continues to be a challenge for Mennonites to disregard race, but it is true that red/brown/black/white Mennonites today work together in over 60 inter-Mennonite organizations.

The institutional revival of the late 19th century for the Mennonite Church, General Conference and Mennonite Brethren came in denominationalization. It brought Sunday schools, church periodicals, mission societies and boards, revivalism and other special services, church schools, publishing houses, benevolent institutions and other new practices.

In the United States the following colleges emerged: Bethel, 1893; Elkhart Institute/Goshen, 1894; Bluffton, 1900; Freeman, 1903; Tabor, 1908; Hesston, 1909; and Eastern Mennonite, 1917. In Canada the first post-elementary schools emerged during the same period: Mennonite Collegiate Institute, 1907; Herbert Bible School, 1913; Mountain View Training School for Ministers, 1921.

Individual congregations increasingly linked up through regional, district and national conferences. What the General Conference began in 1860 was soon followed by others. The Mennonite General Conference formed in 1898; the Conference of Mennonites in central Canada in 1903; the various district conferences among the Mennonite Brethren in 1909-1913; the creation of Amish Mennonite conferences in the late 19th century and their merger with Mennonite General Conference in 1916-1927; the formation of the Canadian provincial conferences (GCs and MBs) in 1928-1937.

The pace of denominationalizing varied between Canada and the United States. Mennonites south of the 49th parallel led the process. The successive, large waves of new Mennonite immigrants to Canada (1870s, 1920s and 1940s) temporarily reinforced a sense of separatism. Canadian institutional building reached its maturity only in the middle third of this century.

Denominations are the U.S. and Canadian form of church organization. They are neither linked to the civil powers, like the state church, nor defined by their opposition to the established church, like the sect. Denominations are organized to achieve definable objectives. Common faith and common life are presumed, but common work is also expected. The mission, the activity of the church, takes on heightened importance. Denominations are also part of the quest for religious community. They provide fellowship, support and discipline for local religious bodies.

The new institutions brought new life and work into the Mennonite denominations. Harold Bender suggested that this institution building created "a new type of church member, of minister and of congregation." It brought new definitions of church, new leadership and a new sense of identity. Denominational institutions and activities are modern creators of a sense of distinctiveness and loyalty.

A clear theology. Clearly stated belief systems can give people a sense of solidarity. Beginning with Daniel Kauffman's *Manual of Bible Doctrine* in 1898, Mennonite theologizing quickened. Borrowing from many traditions, Mennonite schoolmen and publishers sought to identify the central affirmations of Mennonite faith. What emerged were old theologies in new dress and some new orthodoxies. the early promise of Mennonite theologizing seemed not revitalization but the breakup of both the larger Mennonite world and many of its parts. Differing theologies were prominent and contentious.

The theological battles of the larger Protestant culture with heresy squabbles became common to Mennonite groups. As with many Protestant traditions, the colleges became battlegrounds for the conflicting positions. The stories of Bethel College (GC), Tabor (MB) and Goshen (MC) all include episodes of serious conflict over differing religious points of view.

The recovery of the Anabaptist story and the fashioning of a usable tradition helped several Mennonite groups deal with the divisiveness of theological conflict. Anabaptist theology with its vision of discipleship, biblicism, Christian community, non-conformity, love, service and non-resistance was able to mediate between conflicting tendencies or to provide an alternative to newly developing orthodoxies. Anabaptism created for Mennonites a distinctly biblical theology which separated us from neighboring traditions and freed us for greater participation in the world.

Organized systems of thought often arise in response to cultural breakup and replace an earlier corporate sense of belonging. Mennonite bonds, given and historic, had to be defined if Mennonite peoplehood was to have continuing significance. Anabaptism provided those common beliefs.

The Mennonite ecumenical movement is the third means by which the Mennonite nuclei were revitalized. Particularly after the formation of Mennonite Central Committee and the Canadian Mennonite Board of Colonization in the 1920s, Mennonites of various kinds—old/new, eastern/western, Russian/Swiss, Russlaender/Kanadier, rural/urban, liberal/conservative, red/brown/white/black—have joined together to create over 60 inter-Mennonite organizations.

They are voluntary associations designed to focus Mennonite work in the larger world. They provide mutual assistance, museums, relief sales, conferences, mission activity, development work, historical tours, singing fests, schools and other events/places for Mennonites to work, play, worship and converse. The effect is to bind the divergent Mennonite people and traditions to each other. That which we hold in common is nurtured and enlarged.

In this inter-Mennonite network, which increasingly pulls more people into its orbit, many gain a sense of the richness and multicolored tapestry that comprises the Mennonite world. It permits the smaller groups to feel part of something which transcends the limitations of our individual histories. The inter-Mennonite community provides a second level of belonging and meaning that can be more spacious, imaginative and enduring. It complements the institutional activity which proceeded along denominational lines by linking the smaller units for work and activity that require larger resources. Mennonite ecumenics fulfills the same need for fraternity and fellowship that the larger ecumenical movement fills for many Protestant groups.

The institution building, recovery of Anabaptism and ecumenical stirrings came as responses to three events in U.S. and Canadian history most threatening to historic Mennonite separatism. The institutional renaissance began following the urban and industrial revolution, the theological recovery followed World War I and the ecumenical blossomed after World War II.

The revitalized institutions, theologies and alliances have been used differently by members of the larger Mennonite family. Our denominations have created differing institutional patterns, linked Anabaptist theology with varying emphases and selectively participated in the Mennonite alliances. Yet all have found in this mixture a way to live with boundaries that are no longer solid and with a continuing sense of Mennonite identity amidst national and pluralist societies. *Fourth in a series of Meetinghouse articles on 300 years of Mennonites in North America* •

How do you contact God?

David Trembley

"My soul longs, yea, faints for the courts of the Lord" (Psalm 84:1a). It's not surprising, but it certainly is amusing. Most modern people wanting to make contact with transcendence attempt to do so by getting as far away as possible from everyday routine. If we live in the city (as most of us do), we head for the country . . . or at least for the suburbs. We *schedule* our retreats, then we *program* what's going to happen there. We try to figure out what kind of nurture we need, then we go looking for "the proper techniques" which will allow (read "make") it to happen.

How silly and what a waste. The best results we can hope for from our efforts to engineer intimacy with transcendence are relaxation and vacations. Relaxation and vacations are good, but neither has much to do with authentic Christian contemplation. The truly contemplative life (or experience) does not remove people from the realm of actuality. Rather it engages us in a new kind of relationship with actuality in order that precisely in the ordinary things of everyday life we experience the actual-as-real. The contemplative life is not one of escape but of involvement.

With faithless hands, doing the yearly Christmas cards is a monotonous affair. The hands of faith, however, experience divine order everywhere, in the regularity of the motion, in the uniformity of the material and in the commonality of the motivations which lie beneath. Doing Christmas cards becomes a sacramental act for those who have hands to feel, and so it might be for everyone who makes their living stuffing envelopes, whether or not they are doing it with machines.

To say it most simply, the way of Christ is the way of *kenosis* (emptying), and the "proximate agent of ecstasy" is exhaustion. Two thousand years later, the truth remains that it is in losing ourselves that we are found (John 12:24-26). The person most likely to be filled with the fullness of God is the same person who has first been—faithfully and voluntarily—emptied (Philippians 2:5-11).

A familiar old bogey now rears its head. Someone will soon be constrained to speak the venerable caution against works righteousness. Quite so. Ecstasy which is "achieved" (by whatever devious means) is sham-ecstasy at best and, more likely, one more manifestation of an emotional/spiritual pathology.

The contemplative life is not one of escape but of involvement.

All true, and no objections. The more subtle (and more pervasive) danger of works righteousness exists on the front end of the temporal process: working our way into spiritual experiences by means of a diletantish disengagement from the world-as-it-actually-is.

Not just any weariness will do, of course. Exhaustion, per se, is no automatic spiritual virtue. The distinction between banal and spiritual exhaustion very much resembles the Kierkegaardian distinction between pain and suffering. Pain is the unpleasantness which inevitably accompanies our participation in the conditions of human existence. Suffering is the pain which has become (is becoming . . . will be transformed into) meaningfulization because it was chosen for the values in it . . . and to and for the glory of God.

There will be, then, no recipes. The path to genuine Christian spiritual ecstasy will be, in this modern automated world, precisely what it has always been: the via negativa, which passes through the darkness. The darkness will become—gracefully and only gracefully (although there is in that gracefulness the utter predictability of being able and willing to trust in Love)—the luminescence of God.

My hunch (and my experience), though, is that in these times of commercialized spirituality and the idolatry of techniques for spiritual development, the voyager will sooner or later run up against an almost inevitable surprise. It is a nearly inevitable mark of genuine, modern, Christian spirituality that the faithful one will come to discover that he or she has been contacted by the merciful laughter of God.

It raises a brand new problem, of course. How shall we distinguish between the high holy laughter of God and all those counterfeits such as the hysteria of insanity? A good question, but quite a different story. Perhaps while we're waiting to have it told to us, we should remember to look for the grace as we change the flat tire on our car while we are stuck in the center lane of the freeway traffic during rush hour because we weren't quite able to pull off to the side of the road.

I learned as a camp director

Henry Harder

Sally (not her real name) was crying the first time I noticed her. It was time for recreation. All of the campers were supposed to be out on the field, and I was hurrying to join them. I charged out the door and fell flat on my face. She had been sitting on the doorstep. After picking myself up I accompanied her to the playing field.

The next time I noticed her, Sally was walking around on her own during an activity period. Earlier that day her cabin guide had talked to me about her poor attitude. She didn't want to participate in anything. She moped around giving the impression that she was carrying the world on her shoulders. She insisted on wearing a floppy baseball cap, an oversized shirt, ragged jeans and torn sneakers—which contrasted sharply with the other girls in her cabin. Her clothes seemed to personify her—ill fitting and out of place.

Where was her group? At ropes. Why wasn't she there? Not interested. Why not? 'Cause. After this brilliant conversation I sent her to the activity. After all, directors are busy people who don't have time to look for hidden reasons or probe for explanations.

A day or so later I noticed that Sally and Phil, our activity leader, were spending time together. I wasn't immediately concerned since we encourage our staff to build relationships with the campers. Naturally we feel much better if these relationships are with their own cabin guides or staff of the same sex. Since Phil was neither, a warning light flashed. I immediately questioned Phil and he assured me that nothing was amiss, that Sally just wanted someone to talk to. I remember feeling a twinge that maybe I should talk to her. However, I was immediately summoned to another task and the notion passed.

Fortunately, God didn't leave it at that. The Holy Spirit was working with Sally. If I was too busy, he would find another. Unknown to me, Phil and Sally had been meeting regularly in order to talk about the many things bothering her. Eventually Sally made a breakthrough. Unfortunately, I and the other staff didn't see that nor think to ask. We only saw them walking and sitting together. Some other staff had pointed out this relationship to me, and I decided it was time to talk to Phil again. As we gathered for supper, the staff noticed Sally and Phil missing. By the time the meal was over, I was angry and more than ready to confront my staffer. Then the door burst open. Phil came charging in, dragging Sally behind. Their faces were radiant, their smiles incredible; there were tears on Sally's face and both of them were having trouble standing still.

"Guess what! Guess what!" Phil yelled, "You'll never guess."

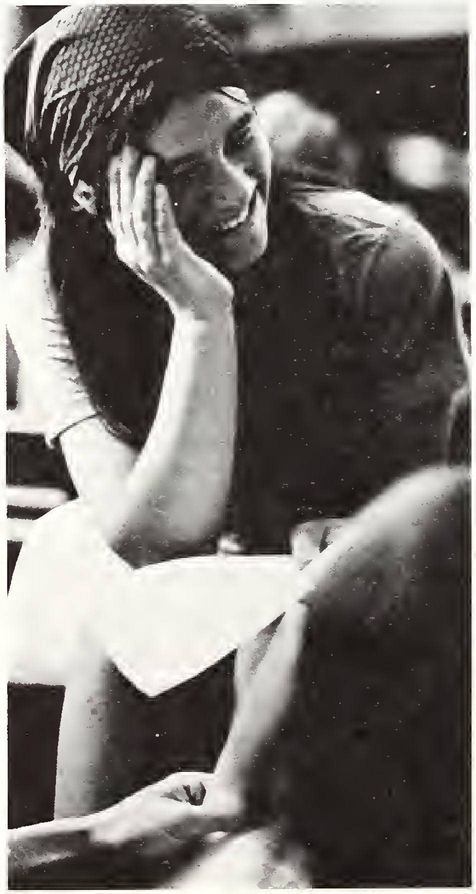
All sorts of thoughts came to me, but I agreed I couldn't guess.

"Sally has accepted Christ!" burst from Phil's lips. That this could be the case was so far from my mind that I didn't grasp what he said. "What?" was all I could manage.

"Sally has accepted Christ. Isn't that great?"

I looked at Sally. Her face was stained where tears had run, but there was also a new glow. She looked so different from before.

Sally had become a new person in Christ.



"Is that true, Sally? Have you accepted Christ?"

I still couldn't believe this was happening. Everyone working at camp desires deeply that all campers come to know Christ, but real encounters are few and far between, especially in the teenage group.

"Are you sure?" I asked again. She looked up at me, wiping tears away, "Yes, I'm sure. I want to have Jesus in my life."

Finally it began to get through to me. Sally had accepted Christ—all those tears before, the aimless walking, the withdrawn behavior. She had been searching and I hadn't seen. I'd been too busy to notice. But thank God he hadn't been limited to using only me. The Spirit had used Phil, and now Sally was a Christian. Praise God. I hugged Sally; I hugged Phil; we hugged each other and tears flowed freely.

Great happiness was in my heart because she found peace and joy in Christ. We looked around and found a Bible for her. She wanted to know about Jesus and we spent time reading and learning together. Phil continued to be her friend and spiritual mentor. Sally listened and participated during Bible lessons. She went to all activities—now an asset to her cabin group.

Camp ended and separation was difficult. We now knew her home was not Christian, that she could expect no support there. We pledged support through prayers and letters. A few weeks later she wrote, saying that she was doing fine. With the help of a local church she was off to a good start.

Once again God taught me that I am weak and he is strong, that he works regardless of what we do, but that it's better if we work along with him. I realized we program the kids and that we need to take time to listen to their needs, to love them. Most of all I learned I'm but one of many struggling to do God's will. The many committed and dedicated staff make camps work. I praise God for the sensitive and caring people who hear his call and respond by giving of themselves at summer camp. I was privileged to work with them last summer and I am grateful for that experience. I praise God for the camping ministry, for Sally and the many more who have come to know Christ at camp and will continue to do so in the future.

We met names and labels

Marvin Zehr

Our visits to 50 General Conference congregations last summer allowed us to get beyond names and labels. *He is a Canadian. She is a woman pastor. He is a strong conference supporter. She is a feminist. He is a conservative. He is a graduate of Grace. They both graduated from the seminary.* These and other labels are often used to describe, without realizing that they result in dividing as well as describing.

Last summer we were privileged to meet people who before were only names and labels. We met people with feelings, ideas, concerns and clear Christian commitments. Though at times we felt hesitancy from some people and churches in our initial contacts and upon arrival, we soon discovered a common experience in Jesus Christ, a mutual concern for others and a fellowship of sharing and prayer. After spending time informally sharing, eating, worshiping, laughing and sometimes sightseeing, it was common to hear words of gratitude for our coming to visit them. There were also numerous expressions of openness and a desire for more such visits from General Conference people.

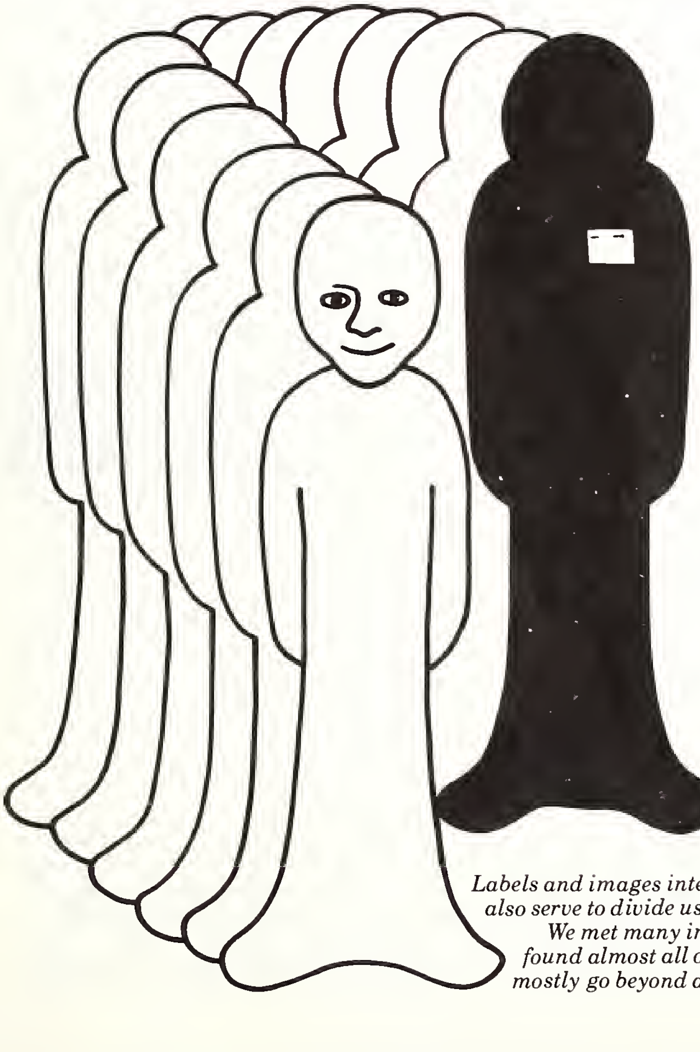
It is our hope that our time in the churches also might have broken down some false images for others. We hope that people will know more fully that others in the conference really are willing to listen, that conference people are sincere, committed Christians, that our peace position is not simply another social fad but deeply rooted in the Scriptures, that the missionary commitment of our conference is strong in terms of personnel and budget, and that elected board members do seek to take seriously what the needs are in local congregations.

It was affirming to see and hear evidences of positive change. A man reported to us, "I came to this church because it was close. I stayed because it is Mennonite." A pastor shared, "When I came here I did not believe in the peace position. Now I don't think a Mennonite church should call a pastor who does not hold the peace position." Another pastor shared his hesitancy to attend an interterm at the Elkhart seminary because of previous impressions. But after having been there and realizing that his impressions were wrong, he is now a strong advocate for others to go to seminary. It was satisfying to hear a lay pastor and his spouse share their excitement about having attended their first Canadian Conference session. It was our feeling that this would not be their last.

We were inspired by being in the home of a young couple. He shared his enthusiasm for his responsibility as church chairperson. We sensed clearly this was a growing experience for him. He spoke glowingly of the care, nurture and encouragement he has felt from his pastor in this responsibility. We were gratified to hear lay people express their dreams and firm commitments to the ministry in their local congregation but also in the district, provincial, Canadian and General Conference programs. Our faith in our church-related Bible schools, colleges and seminary has been confirmed as we experienced their fruits in the many people we met whose lives have been touched in so many ways.

Yes, there are many differences within and among us in General Conference. However, we discovered there is more that unites us than divides us. It is the task of each of us to work at keeping this in proper perspective. We have a great mission to carry out if we allow that vision to capture our commitments.

We will long remember the opportunity of being with a couple with whom we have clear and sincere differences in personal and conference discussions. After sharing with them some of their experiences and dreams, some of our thoughts and concerns in making this trip, we joined hands and prayed for one another, our congregations, our conference and our future. We parted knowing that we are truly brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ. That is a part of what it means to belong to General Conference. *Last in a series of four*



Labels and images intended to describe, often also serve to divide us.
We met many images and labels and found almost all of them inadequate. People mostly go beyond any labels and images.

Jesus was throwing curves with his parables, says Peter S. Hawkins in his article "Parable as Metaphor" (*Christian Scholar's Review*, Vol. XII, No. 3). For Hawkins, parable is the *proclamation* of a mystery, not necessarily the explanation. The rabbis told stories to illustrate points, but Jesus seemed to be intentionally creating confusion. Parable—*para* ("beside") + *bole* ("throw"). "In metaphor, A is described as B," says Hawkins, associate professor of religion and literature at Yale Divinity School. He cites "All flesh is grass" as a classic metaphor. "This simple sentence is at once the assertion of an underground likeness and the denial of a superficial truth. 'Flesh' both 'is' and 'is not' grass. . . . [The metaphor] is a window that opens up a new view." Take the parable about the man who found a treasure in a field and bought the field. No one seems willing to entertain the possibility, says Hawkins, "that what the discoverer does with the treasure he finds on someone else's property . . . is morally compromising enough to be called a shady deal." This is the "curve ball" that keeps us guessing. Hawkins distinguishes between illustrative stories and parables, which "challenge our presuppositions about everything in order to lead us someplace new." God regularly surpasses not only our human wisdom, but also our religious sensibilities.

NEWS

Markham church opens the arms of sanctuary

Markham, Ill.—Following through on a commitment made last November, Community Mennonite Church offered sanctuary to a young Salvadoran refugee at a special service on June 5.

In extending their hospitality and protection to Mauricio Acosta Garcia (an assumed name), the congregation became another in a growing number of churches in the Chicago area to provide aid to Salvadoran political refugees who live in the United States under threat of deportation by the Immigration and Naturalization Service.

In explaining the congregation's action during the June 5 service, Menno Ediger, co-pastor of Community Church, said, "We here in Markham have heard the call to give assistance to refugees from Central America. We are people of faith wanting to be faithful in the provision of sanctuary. We take no pride, we have no joy in running afoul of the law of the land in so doing. On the other hand, we make no apology for so doing. . . .

"The first and greatest commandment is that we shall love God with all our heart and soul and mind and strength. And the second commandment is like unto it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. In offering sanctuary to Mauricio and to others who may follow, we believe we are saying 'yes' to Almighty God."

Ediger implored the U.S. government to "stop the madness of the carnage in El Salvador; stop making it possible for brother to rise up against brother. . . . Look to see whether there is not a better, more constructive way. The real enemy is not an 'ism.' The real enemy is lust and greed and hate and hypocrisy which lead to warfare and killing."

Worship minister Chuck Neufeld and Garcia: The real enemy is not an "ism."

In responding to the church's action, Garcia shared the story of his escape from El Salvador to Guatemala, Mexico and finally the United States at the Arizona border. "I was studying in the last year of secondary school, but because of the situation I had to leave," said Garcia. "The reason I left the country was because one time the army seized a classmate. They beat him and threatened him with death. But they gave him a chance, and told him that if he would give names of classmates they would let him go free. That is how he left after three days in jail.

"The day after leaving he let us know. We told our fathers, and they were all in agreement that we should leave the country."

Garcia related that his group was deported by Mexican authorities back to Guatemala after their first border crossing there, but was successful in crossing into Mexico on their second attempt. A Tucson, Ariz., pastor assisted Garcia after his entry into the United States and helped him reach Markham.

"Before I left El Salvador, many terrible things were happening," Garcia continued. "One day a classmate of mine appeared, cut into three parts, on three different parts of a street. Such things are occurring all the time, and many people that are not participating in either of the two groups (army or rebel forces) are suffering."

"In offering sanctuary to Mauricio and to others who may follow, we believe we are saying 'yes' to Almighty God."

A number of other General Conference-related organizations and member congregations have publicly declared themselves sanctuaries or urged consideration of the sanctuary position by churches. Among them are the GC Commission on Home Ministries, Central District Conference, Faith Mennonite Church in Minneapolis, Hyattsville (Md.) Mennonite Church and Mennonite Central Committee Peace Section.

Members of several other GC churches have become involved in sheltering or transporting refugees, although no formal congregational decisions have been made. *Larry Cornies*

A water buffalo is loaded onto a truck in Vientiane province (right). This buffalo and 49 others were transported to village farmers in Xieng Khouang province in northern Laos. This project, a joint project of Mennonite Central Committee and Redd-Barna Thailand, enables village farmers to produce rice more efficiently and rebuild their lives, which were disrupted by the Indochina War.

The teaching of Hobart Freeman of Faith Assembly Church, Fort Wayne, Ind., that members should shun doctors has resulted in the deaths, over a nine-year period, of 52 people, including 28 babies and seven older children, according to the *Fort Wayne News Sentinel.* Freeman, 63, tells his followers he doesn't expect to die and those that turn from his teaching will go to hell. People with faith, he says, don't need doctors.

Northern District studies 'mission,' approves youth position

Henderson, Neb.—Evoking the most spirited discussion at the 90th sessions of the Northern District conference, held at the Bethesda Mennonite Church here June 16-19, was the issue of a youth minister.

The NDC education committee recommended a half-time position with a budget of $10,450. Eldon Quiring, committee chairman, explained that the annual cost amounted to $2.38 per member.

Some expressed fear that such a position might benefit only larger youth groups. In view of the previous year's $8,000 shortfall, others expressed hesitancy to add such an item to the budget. The recommendation passed with a 60 percent vote. One potential candidate for the position expressed serious reservations about accepting the assignment with such lukewarm support.

The total budget of $182,435 (including that for a youth minister) was adopted by conference action by an 86 percent "yes" vote. This included $21,050 for church planting at Billings, Mont. Henry and Anne Penner will assume responsibility at Billings later this year. Taking over the emerging Mankato Mennonite Fellowship will be Gordon and Doloris Krause, Mountain Lake, Minn. Explorations continue about possible work in Fargo-Morehead, N.D., and among Hispanics in West St. Paul, Minn.

For the first time in many years a layman, Aaron Glanzer, Salem, S.D., was elected president of the conference. Others elected were Albert Harder, financial secretary; Alvin Eitzen, program committee; Ben Sawatzky, committee on the ministry; Robert O. Epp and Tim Waltner, peace and social concerns; Harry Sawatzky and Keith Waltner, home missions committee; Eldon Quiring, Lucille Hofer and Erna Graber, education committee; Don Frey, General Conference Commission on Home Ministries, and Larry Tschetter, General Conference Commission on Overseas Mission.

Speaker for the conference was Darrell Fast, native of Bethesda, now pastor of the Toronto United Mennonite Church. He reminded the audience that one can't drive into the future looking through the rearview mirror, and addressed the conference five times under the theme of the "Church in Mission."

During a "kingdom happenings" spot, Mrs. Terry Tyler, Warroad, Minn., shared a moving testimony of God's leading following the sudden death of her pastor husband 10 months earlier. Ernest Neufeld, conference minister, shared experiences garnered from traveling 29,000 miles in visiting 82 percent of the district churches this past year. Pastors new to the district this year included Michael Bogard, Dick Wohlgemuth, Steve Tyler, Eleanor Beachey and Gordon Krause.

Martha Graber, Inter-Mennonite Council on Aging, reported that the Northern District had the highest percentage of members over age 65 (24 percent). Ben Sawatzky, just returned from India, requested prayer for national Indian leadership during a crisis experience there. Harris Waltner, outgoing NDC member to COM, reported that if every GC member gave $54 toward the COM budget, all its financial needs would be met.

One special highlight included a "parade of committees" narrated by vice president Albert Epp. Committee members carried symbols of their committee and placed an appropriate banner on the choir loft railing. These many workers ringed the audience in a vast circle, a graphic illustration of the "great cloud of witnesses."

Willis Busenitz, Busby, Mont., president for the past four years, used the Indian drum as a symbol in his conference message. He noted that everyone marches to some drum. Christ bids us to march to his drumbeat, but this takes courage and conviction. He called the six beats those of righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience and gentleness.

Mennonite Men adopted a budget of $11,500. Larry Tschetter, returned Mennonite Central Committee worker from Bolivia, related his experiences there.

Women in Mission used a $15,000-estate gift to give $5,000 to Swan Lake Christian Camp and $2,500 each to: Window to Mission, NDC budget, Freeman (S.D.) Junior College and Missionary Supplementary Retirement Fund. Edith Tschetter shared with the ladies about the life of the typical MCC volunteer in primitive rural areas in Bolivia.

Willis Busenitz, outgoing president, handed the ceremonial peace pipe to Aaron Glanzer, indicative of the transfer of leadership. A new beaded pouch with the conference logo had been prepared by Victoria Walksalong.

At the close of the Sunday morning session, Ted Risingsun directed the Cheyenne giveaway by seven Cheyenne. Because of the honor bestowed on their pastor, Willis Busenitz, they presented him with new moccasins plus a new vest emblazoned with the conference logo on the front, and on the back a tepee, a cross, a circle depicting oneness and four feathers portraying the four Cheyenne churches. Nadine Busenitz received a medallion as well as a new shawl.

The Cheyenne also presented special gifts to Wilbur and Laverna Friesen, Ernest and Lila Neufeld, Mr. and Mrs. Aaron Glanzer and every pastor of the Northern District received a beaded belt buckle. *Helen Friesen*

A March Gallup poll found that 73 percent of Canadians drink alcoholic beverages, at least occasionally. The rest claimed to be total abstainers. This percentage of drinkers is slightly lower than the 1978 figure of 78 percent. The survey also found that the 18-29 age group had the highest number of drinkers, with 83 percent. The Brewers Association of Canada and the Addiction Research Foundation of Ontario report that those who do drink, drink slightly more than in the past.

Preregistration forms for the 1984 XI Assembly of Mennonite World Conference in Strasbourg, France, will be distributed to congregations in North America this September. Included with this material will be a Menno Travel Service travel request form and a housing application form. Because of the fluctuations in exchange rates, registration fees will not be announced until the preregistration materials go to press in August. Everyone is urged to register promptly, in any event not later than Dec. 15. For more information write XI Assembly Registrar, Mennonite World Conference, 528 E. Madison St., Lombard, IL 60148.

Strasbourg's concert hall, one of the locations for the XI Assembly of Mennonite World Conference, July 24-29, 1984

International delegation reports on visit to Soviet Union

Akron, Pa. (MCC)—Maintaining contacts with Soviet churches and making a witness for international peace were goals of a 12-member international Mennonite peace study tour to the Soviet Union May 6-23.

The participants, including Mennonite church leaders from West Germany, the Netherlands, the United States and Canada, visited seven cities in the European, Siberian and Central Asian regions of the Soviet Union. Mennonite Central Committee sponsored the study tour.

Tour members were quick to observe that one can "only touch the surface of life in the Soviet Union" in a short study tour. The most lasting impressions for the group were of a country that fears the West and fears war, and of a church where "God is at work," observed participant Edgar Stoesz, MCC associate executive secretary.

The group met with the leadership of the All-Union Council of Evangelical Christian Baptists (AUCECB), worshiped in and brought greetings to Baptist and Mennonite churches. There are more than 60 million Christians in the Soviet Union. The group also attended Russian Orthodox Church services and visited two of the three Orthodox seminaries. AUCECB provided a guide for the tour.

Stoesz noted that Mennonites, Baptists and Orthodox churches gave a unanimous message: "Thank you for coming. Visit us again. Pray for us. We are also praying for you."

The Soviet church continues to operate under clear restrictions, tour members noted. But they observed that Westerners might be surprised that churches conduct from three to five church services each week in addition to choir practices. A number of congregations enjoy new or improved church buildings. For example, the Mennonite church in Alma Ata, in south-central Asia, recently remodeled and improved their church building.

The tour's special emphasis on peace grew out of the most recent MCC study tour four years ago, the Interreligious Peace Conference in Moscow in June 1982, and from conversations with Soviet Baptist leaders who visited MCC in 1981. The Baptist pastors had stressed to MCC the importance of church people continuing to share concerns on international peace.

Peace was a key topic raised in contacts with the churches. A well-trusted church leader there emphasized that peace should be on the agenda for all MCC contacts in the Soviet Union.

Conversations in the churches and with peace committees returned repeatedly to themes of fear and peace. The group learned that the average Soviet citizen has a deep fear of U.S. aggression. Statements by President Reagan were cited as the basis for these fears.

Tour members emphasized that the international military conduct of the Soviet Union and the United States create a global climate of fear and hostility.

The guide talked about vivid memories of war for Soviet people—20 million Soviet citizens died in the last world war—and of the fear of a catastrophic war in "our lifetime." She said, "We are so afraid of war that we are afraid to bring children into the world." Stoesz told her, "You know, we hear young people saying that same thing in America."

Tour members returned with an urgency to "give visibility to the people of the Soviet Union, people with hopes and fears not unlike our own." They noted that Westerners should not penalize the Soviet people for the past atrocities of the Soviet government or for current government policies but should continue attempts at sincere dialogue.

Among contacts for peace were meetings with Soviet peace committees in Moscow and Kiev. These meetings were cordial in spite of frank questions put to the Soviets, said Urbane Peachey, executive secretary of Peace Section. He noted that the peace committees are neither Christian nor pacifist in nature, but are official committees authorized by the government. In spite of differences in orientation between the committees and the Mennonite visitors, there were discussions concerning the dangers of war and the hostile rhetoric that is carried on by both the Soviet and the U.S. governments.

It is important to meet with such groups as well as to discuss peace with church groups, Peachey believes. *Kristina Mast Burnett*

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Leading minister needed

Lowe Farm (Man.) Bergthaler Mennonite Church, membership of 140, is looking for a leading minister. The church is located in a predominantly Mennonite farming community.

Direct inquiries to:
Randy Schroeder
Box 55
Lowe Farm, MB R0G 1E0.

The Prairie Peace Pilgrimage, which involved 15-20 "peace pilgrims" walking from Salina, Kan., to Wichita, Kan., a distance of nearly 90 miles, took place June 3-12. Among the walkers who covered the entire distance were Willow, a young woman who lost a leg and a lung to cancer as a teenager and walks with crutches, and 73-year-old Ed Kauffman, a Mennonite. Others joined the pilgrimage during part of the route, including a dozen or so at Newton. The group worshiped and spoke about disarmament at stops along the way. In Wichita, prayer vigils were held at several locations, plus a large worship on Sunday, June 12.

No one stopped Ronald and Nancy Reagan when they stepped forward to receive holy communion at the funeral mass for a former presidential aide. Afterward, the president's Catholic liaison sent Reagan a memo explaining that "only Catholics should receive communion at a Catholic service," according to the Washington archdiocese's *Catholic Standard.* An archdiocesan official told the *Standard* that a priest at Washington's Navy chapel was probably "flustered and chose to avoid embarrassing the president." Reagan is an irregular churchgoer who lists his religious affiliation as Presbyterian.

The number of people served at U.S. soup kitchens and other emergency food dispensaries rose dramatically last year: half of 181 such programs surveyed by the Center of Budget and Policy Priorities said the number of people they served grew more than 50 percent from February 1982 to February 1983. More than one-third of the feeding programs had doubled in size during the year, said the author of the study, and 88 percent of the programs surveyed reported the people they served asked for aid because their food stamps did not provide enough food to last the month.

Land conservation: stemming the loss of 320 acres per hour

Akron, Pa. (MCC U.S.)—Most people today are unaware of their dependence on the thin, fragile sheet of topsoil that covers the earth. But without topsoil and arable cropland, farmers cannot produce the food that we all need to survive.

Lester Brown of the Worldwatch Institute says that "civilization can survive the exhaustion of oil reserves, but not the continuing, wholesale loss of topsoil." Yet the world population continues to increase while topsoil and arable cropland continue to disappear.

In a United States Department of Agriculture booklet *Where Have All the Farmlands Gone?* these facts are reported: "In the war between the bulldozer and the plow, 1 million acres of America's *prime* farmlands are urbanized each year. We are losing another 2 million acres of lesser quality, yet productive, land each year. [This] annual loss of 3 million acres is the equivalent of 320 acres of farmland *every hour.*"

According to the recent United Nations comprehensive report *The World Environment 1972-1982*, the loss of arable cropland worldwide is over 36 million acres each year. Of this total, 20 million acres are lost by urban and industrial encroachment, 7.1 million acres by erosion.

Soil is not only lost to urban bulldozers and erosion. Each year acres of productive soil deteriorates into unproductive soil. According to the *Global 2000 Report to the President*, "serious deterioration of agricultural soils [occurs worldwide] due to erosion, loss of organic matter, desertification, salination, alkalinization and waterlogging."

Worldwide each year, 4.5 million acres turns into desert and another 4.5 million acres of arable cropland is lost by toxication, according to the UN report *The World Environment 1972-1982*.

One way to get more arable cropland is to cut down forests. But this is not without serious ecological consequences. Present forests are already disappearing at the rate of 45 to 50 million acres each year.

By the year 2000 it is expected that there will be only half as much arable cropland available per person as there was in 1970. It is not difficult to see why the World Bank has estimated that the number of malnourished people in poor countries could rise from around 500 million in 1970 to 1.3 billion in 2000.

The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization estimates that a 60-percent increase in food, fish and forest production will be needed by the year 2000 to maintain current patterns of consumption, some of which are already inadequate. It is clear that more land and more intensive agriculture will be needed to meet future food needs.

Mennonite Central Committee, as a Christian resource for meeting human need, has an urgent and valid mission to help protect arable cropland and enhance and increase food production. In 1982 MCC had 128 workers overseas doing agricultural development.

But in the light of increasing population and decreasing acres of arable land, MCC is considering expanding its agriculture and forestry projects. Expansion could include reforestation, irrigation and water resource management, alternate energy sources and techniques, the development of labor-intensive, energy-efficient types of agriculture and the support of local people who are protecting prime croplands from urbanization, industrialization and flooding from dam projects.

Constituents can help MCC accomplish this expansion in several ways:

- Gain awareness about the issues raised in this article and study them. The problems are complex, but the general principle is clear. Human population growth will continue to put a severe strain on the soil.
- Study First World lifestyles. Are our patterns of consumption and our present food and agriculture systems compatible with biological systems worldwide?
- Conserve resources. Protect cropland from encroachment and deterioration. Conserve and restore soil. Plant trees. Restore degraded land. Build houses only on marginal land. Maintain small lawns.
- Study and practice sustainable agriculture.
- Get appropriate agricultural training or support a young person to do so.
- Correlate the teachings of the Bible with stewardship of land and other natural resources. Practice Leviticus 25:23: "Your land must not be sold on a permanent basis because you do not own it; it belongs to God and you are like foreigners who are allowed to make use of it." *Art Meyer*

The Calvary Mennonite Church and the First Christian Church, both of Liberal, Kan., have for several years had a joint day camp. This year the camp took place from May 31 to June 4. Approximately 75 campers participated in a variety of activities this year, including singing, crafts, special projects, skits, bannermaking, Bible verse memorization and Bible lessons.

An ecumenical Church Computer Users Network held its first national meeting in April in Dallas. Begun under Methodist auspices, it also attracted Anglican, Lutheran and Reformed interest. Methodist president of the group, Kenneth Beddell, told the session that "the computer has become a model for the all-knowing God, a new idol. We must de-idolize it." He warned against "computerphobia" because while they are "not the salvation of the church . . . neither are they something to be avoided."

Archbishop Remi De Roo has attacked Canada's federal and provincial budgets, saying they ignore the unemployed and the poor and improperly leave to the private sector responsibility for pulling the nation out of its current economic problems. "Tax breaks for the rich don't help the poor and the unemployed," he said. He added that the government was relying for recovery on the wrong moral values-profits and growth instead of passionate concern for the poor. "Full employment must once again become a national priority," he said.

Nicaragua (part one): These people are not our enemies

Editors' note: This is the first of two interpretive articles on Nicaragua. The second will run in our July 19 issue.

Managua, Nicaragua (MCC)—Five U.S. citizens, who happen to be Mennonite Central Committee workers living in or visiting Nicaragua, quietly walk into a mass just as it begins.

This is a lower-class Catholic parish where most of the faithful consider participation in Nicaragua's four-year-old revolution an expression of their faith.

Early in the service the priest pauses to ask where we are from—"the United States, right?" News of a greatly expanded invasion attempt by U.S.-backed counterrevolutionaries was released the previous week and a French medical doctor known to the parish was assassinated by the guerrillas two days earlier. Reference to "U.S. imperialism" peppers the service, though in a way more sadly matter-of-fact than bitter.

The priest and then the congregation thank us effusively for our presence and for our willingness to share in Nicaragua's suffering. "The people of Nicaragua have a love for the people of North America," says the priest. "That these brothers and sisters are here tells us that the people of North America do not share or support the policies of President Reagan."

Whether or not their hopeful reading of U.S. public opinion is true, in the drama of such personal acceptance one thing seems clear: These people are not our enemies.

But the relationship between the United States and Nicaragua has reached a critical low point with the June 6 expulsion of three U.S. diplomats from Nicaragua for their alleged part in CIA activities to destabilize the Nicaraguan government and assassinate Foreign Minister Miguel D'Escoto. The United States responded by expelling 21 Nicaraguan consular officials and closing all six Nicaraguan consulates. The United States is threatening more retaliatory actions to protest the charges which it described as "all lies."

The people of Nicaragua are fearful of what U.S. policies will mean for their faltering new government.

Earlier, on April 27, President Reagan addressed a special joint session of Congress and sought to marshal support for the no-longer covert U.S. support of counterrevolutionary guerrillas battling Nicaragua's Sandinista government.

Key shortcomings of the Sandinistas, according to the president, were that they were responsible for the breakdown of U.S.-Nicaragua relations, had consistently rejected peace efforts, had reneged on promises to hold elections, had moved against the country's private sector and that "violence is Nicaragua's most important export," especially to El Salvador.

The Sandinistas have consistently denounced U.S. policy toward their country since July 19, 1979, the day they assumed power. The history of U.S. intervention in Nicaragua, with its periods of rule by U.S. Marines and then nearly 50 years of maintaining the Somoza family dynasty as a brutal military kingpin for U.S. policy in Central America, has smacked of "imperialism." But while harsh, constant reminders of that history by the newly triumphant are comprehensible, they do not make it easier to construct the foundation for a new era.

President Carter tried. To this Reagan referred when he said that "for two years the United States voted for democracy" in Nicaragua, through a major aid package. But in the last months of the Carter administration, relations with Nicaragua had begun to sour.

The attitude of the Reagan administration toward Nicaragua has resulted in the further deterioration of the relationship between the two countries.

The Reagan administration's consistently harsh economic policies in addition to crippling political retaliation seems to be forcing Nicaragua to seek support from the Eastern Bloc countries.

Apart from experiencing firsthand one of the most infamous Latin American dictatorships that the United States has supported, Nicaraguans know the history of U.S.-backed coups in Guatemala (1954) and Chile (1973).

But while the Reagan administration demands region-wide negotiations, Nicaragua has insisted on talks directly with the United States and Honduras. It simply is not true that the Sandinistas have rejected all peace efforts. Rather, the president has left himself much more open to that charge by so long ignoring what is arguably the most viable peace effort to date—the mediation efforts of the so-called "Contadora Group" consisting of foreign ministers of Mexico, Panama, Venezuela and Colombia.

What really distresses President Reagan most in Central America and

Since 1942, Mennonite Central Committee has been sharing North American resources—wheat, milk powder and soap—with institutions in India that serve the poorest of the poor through its Material Resources Assistance Program. Fifty-seven agencies receive material resources from MCC—hospitals, orphanages, homes for the aged, hostels and schools with nutrition programs, homes for the handicapped and mother and child-care centers. These agencies fall into different categories. The Damien Social Welfare Centre rehabilitates lepers, who learn skills such as weaving, candle and leather making, and dairy and poultry care.

A leprosy victim in India spins thread for blankets that will be woven, then purchased and distributed by MCC.

If the entire world consumed oil at the 1980 U.S. rate of 30 barrels per person per year, the world's proven oil reserves would be exhausted in five years. (*The Other Side*)

the Caribbean are "strategic interests," which he referred to frequently in his April 27 speech. And the stability of "the entire region from the Panama Canal to Mexico" may very well be at stake.

But why not work at it the way Panama and Mexico are themselves doing—through persevering mediation, serious negotiation and ultimately, truly respectful relations? *Gerald Schlabach.*

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Conference of Mennonites in Canada
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8. **Austria, Hungary and the Soviet Union: July 29 - August 17, 1984.** Hosts: Al Reimer, John R. Friesen and Roy Vogt (Waiting list only)
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Contact: John Schroeder, Ruth Wiebe, Lori Neufeld, Hilda Driedger.

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Fundamental Publishers is issuing a new line of "Christian Hero" cards. Kids are supposed to collect and trade them like the baseball novelties they're modeled after. The cards, which feature 300 Protestant reformers and missionaries, sell for 15 cents apiece. Although the heroes portrayed are almost exclusively male, one card *is* devoted to Susanna Wesley. Her stated claim to fame? She bore 19 children in 19 years. (*The Other Side*)

"Our general impressions of the conference were very positive," write Kenneth and Mary Bauman of First Mennonite Church, Berne, Ind., about the May 25-28 conference "The Church and Peacemaking in the Nuclear Age." "It was a miracle to get the evangelicals together to discuss peacemaking," Kenneth writes, "and this was done in the spirit of Christian grace. I appreciated the call for both personal and national repentance for sin. Peace involves personal salvation as well as social concern and national peace. . . . I was impressed with the quality of presentations given by blacks and astonished at the superficial messages of some whites."

Pasadena conference achieves 'balanced approach' to peace

Pasadena, Calif. (NCP)—At a workshop leaders' orientation the first day of the conference on "The Church and Peacemaking in the Nuclear Age," a scientist who had spent his career in nuclear bomb design prayed in a small group, "Lord, give me the courage to change my mind if my experience here points in that direction."

That attitude characterized many of the 1,400 participants at the May 25-28 meeting in Pasadena. As at most conferences, many probably left as convinced as they had come. But there is no doubt that the issues of peace and war now have an unprecedented visibility and respectability among evangelicals.

The purpose of this first widely representative peace conference of evangelical Christians was to "examine issues related to the nuclear arms race from diverse Christian perspectives . . . emphasizing the witness of the Scriptures as they shed light on such matters."

Program planners made a diligent and largely successful effort to balance three positions: biblical pacifism, just war and peace through strength. The three positions were clearly set out by a panel the first morning of the conference.

Ronald Sider rooted the biblical basis for pacifism in the way God in Jesus confronted evil and enemies through the cross. He went on to urge a non-violent alternative in responding to threats against freedom—civilian-based defense.

The just war theory was brought up to date by Richard Mouw, professor at Calvin College, whose honesty and compassion were transparent to all. His appeal was for such a rigorous application of just war theory that it would be hard to imagine a situation in which a modern war would be justified. On the basis of just war doctrine, Mouw ruled out any defensive or offensive use of nuclear weapons.

Evangelist David Breese suggested that the six main disturbers of the peace in today's world are: communism's intention of world conquest, the Arab anti-Israeli attitude, Islamic fundamentalism, OPEC oil price pressure, liberation theology which justifies Marxist revolution, and infantile, volatile political leaders such as Arafat and Khomeni. Breese stated his belief that all these threats to peace are kept in check by U.S. arms and that the use of nuclear weapons would be justified to save "Western Christian civilization." Some evangelicals, especially those from non-white, western background, found this address sorely lacking in any dimension of the universality of the church. The "peace through strength" position, as presented, was based more on pragmatic considerations than the Bible.

The connections between justice and peace were forcefully injected into the discussion the second morning by black panelists Bill Pannell and John Perkins. Joining them in the discussion of "Biblical Faith and Military Expenditures" was Sen. William Armstrong, who advocated a way out of what he called "the current nuclear madness" through "High Frontier," a defensive system to destroy incoming missiles utilizing existing technology.

The evening speakers also represented a variety of viewpoints, from Fuller Seminary president David Hubbard's careful posing of the questions the Bible brings to all viewpoints, to the passionate defense of using military force to contain communism, brought by the chairperson of the Institute on Religion and Democracy, Ed Robb. Retired Air Force General Robert Mathis shared his personal pilgrimage through a military career, but ended by stating we must get rid of nuclear weapons and learn to love and understand those who are different from us.

Former executive director of the Congressional Black Caucus, Barbara Williams-Skinner, combined a born-again spirituality with concern for peace and justice in an address that was one of the highlights of the conference.

The final evening address was by Jim Wallis, who had managed a brief reprieve from jail to speak to the conference. Although weary from the events of the week that had started on Monday with arrest for praying at the U.S. Capitol, Wallis spoke in a quiet but forceful voice, his address full of affirmations based on the Scriptures and the faith assumptions of the people of God.

Many from the historic peace churches were grateful for an achievement which had seemed impossible only a few years ago. Twenty years ago a few evangelicals met with some Mennonite representatives at Winona Lake, Ind., for an off-the-record discussion of peace issues. Vernon Grounds, moderator of the Pasadena Conference, was on the planning committee for that earlier meeting. In 1967 a more public meeting for the same purpose was held at Eastern Mennonite College in Harrisonburg, Va. It wasn't until the vision, questioning and energy was sufficiently widespread in the evangelical community, however, that a dialogue of the kind that took place at Pasadena could happen, bringing together evangelicals from 34 states and seven countries.

The 100 Friends, Brethren and Mennonites who attended a New Call to Peacemaking caucus the last day of the conference praised God that the dialogue had been so greatly expanded.
Edgar Metzler

New directions among evangelicals

J. R. Burkholder

"The Church and Peacemaking in the Nuclear Age" was billed as the first gathering of its kind. Some 1,400 participants registered in Pasadena, Calif., for three days in May (see p. 328).

I believe that the conference achieved its objective of encouraging discussion between opposing viewpoints. Although the lengthy plenary sessions did not allow for sustained debate, conversations continued in the hallways.

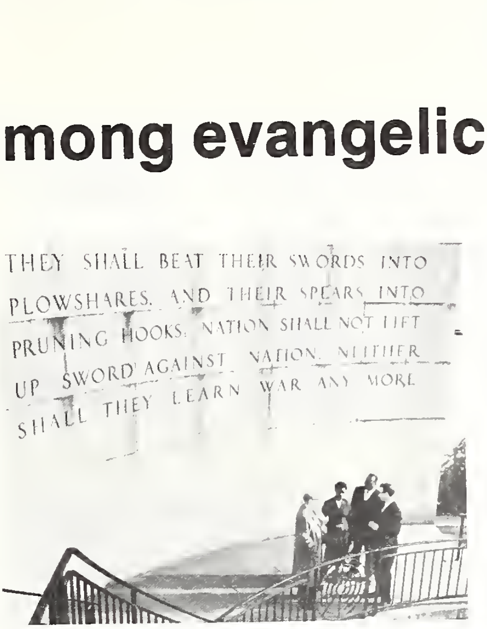
A first significant theme was the growing recognition that the "enemy" is not the Russian people. American evangelicals are learning that there are millions of believers in the Soviet Union, perhaps more practicing Christians than in western Europe. These brothers and sisters in Christ, the targets of American strategic nuclear missiles, are surely better understood as themselves victims of Kremlin oppression than as guilty warmongers.

Such awareness counters the simplistic "American good versus Russian evil" rhetoric so often heard from U.S. officialdom or from fundamentalist radio preachers. Very few voices at Pasadena echoed such sentiments; instead, even many who were otherwise "hawkish" called for love for the Soviet people.

Second, the morality of nuclear deterrence strategy was called into question frequently by people at varying points on the ethical and political spectrum. Of course, traditional pacifists continue to witness against such weaponry. The just war proponents, such as Richard Mouw and John R. W. Stott, criticized "mutual assured destruction" as inherently immoral, as did Sen. Armstrong, who in other respects repeated the conventional rationale for cold war militarism. It appears that the evangelicals and the Catholic bishops are moving closer together.

"Civilian-based defense" emerged as a third focal issue. This extension of Gandhian non-violence, elaborated for some time in the work of political scientist Gene Sharp, has now been popularized for an evangelical audience by Ron Sider and Richard Taylor in *Nuclear Holocaust and Christian Hope*. Sider called for creating a "peace brigade" model in his panel address, and several workshops explored the idea.

A retired military officer was overheard saying that he's ready to volunteer for such a non-violent mission.


THEY SHALL BEAT THEIR SWORDS INTO
PLOWSHARES, AND THEIR SPEARS INTO
PRUNING HOOKS. NATION SHALL NOT LIFT
UP SWORD AGAINST NATION, NEITHER
SHALL THEY LEARN WAR ANY MORE

Myron Augsburger, speaking to a caucus of 100 Friends, Brethren and Mennonites, suggested the formation of global peacekeeping task forces that would seek to prevent violence. As the conference put forward these various ideas for active non-violence and alternative security strategies, it seemed that civilian-based defense is an idea whose time has come.

Finally, however, one underlying question kept recurring as perhaps the most critical issue: Is our loyalty to God or to Caesar? Or, since no one at Pasadena would admit to putting Caesar ahead of God, a more precise way of posing the question: Is God's will expressed through the church or through the nation-state? This, I believe, is the crucial dividing line, cutting across differences of denomination, theology and ethical positions.

Throughout the conference, moderator Vernon Grounds and others reminded the group of the need to affirm our unity in Christ. These expressions were well-intended, but affirmations of unity remain at the merely verbal level until they are tested in actual social settings. And that's where the problems begin.

For example, is my solidarity with Russian Christians more basic than my citizenship in the United States or vice versa? And what difference does that make in the crunch of wartime? Granted that we all declare ultimate allegiance to God, the great divide is between those who rank church above nation and, on the other hand, those who line up ready to fight and kill under a particular flag.

This question may really be more revealing than the various positions with regard to the use of violence. The essence of the classic just war rationale is that violence may be justified as an instance of neighbor love, when it's a matter of defending the "innocent" against an aggressor. This language was heard often at Pasadena. But in the real world, wars are not fought for such noble reasons. Nations go to war over territory, over resources, over political ideologies, over who is going to rule whom.

Yet most Christians in most nation-states have simply gone along with the wars declared under their flag, without really measuring the cause by the just war criterion. And on the other hand, I know members of peace churches who refuse to go to war themselves but are pleased that the cause of the nation is being defended by others. The idolatry of Caesar is very much alive.

A new way of working at this question was proposed by Timothy Smith, church historian and Nazarene minister, who startled the conference with his exegesis of the important Romans 13 passage. He observed that in Paul's time, the "authority" preserving order and dispensing justice, to whom Paul enjoined submission, was in actual function a *world* government, the "pax Romana" ruling the known civilized realm. Therefore Smith suggested that Christians today should work for world order rather than give their allegiance to lesser nationalisms.

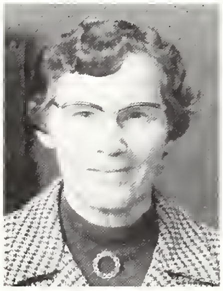
With these four themes, I believe that we have new agenda for continuing a creative dialogue in evangelical Christian circles and beyond on the major matter of war and peace. While the perennial question is still "to kill or not to kill," perhaps the converging of these other themes can open new avenues of discussion and commitment. Allow me to attempt to link them together in the form of questions for further dialogue:

- If the deterrence doctrine of "mutual assured destruction" is immoral as well as dangerous, can we begin to think about alternative security measures such as civilian-based defense?
- If Russian people are not the enemy, can we begin to ask whether any nationalism is worthy of Christian loyalty and seek instead to establish a genuine world order?

J. R. Burkholder, professor at Goshen (Ind.) College, is completing a sabbatical assignment as director of the Dallas Peace Center.

RECORD

workers



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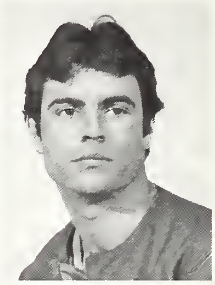

E. Schmidt

Foxalls

Schmidts

Anna Dyck, COM missionary to Japan since 1953, has returned for a short North America assignment from May-October. She is located in Drake, Sask., where she is a member of North Star Church.

Carl and *Hilda Epp*, COM missionaries to Taiwan since 1972, have returned to North America. Carl is the recipient of a fellowship to study infectious diseases at the Winnipeg General Hospital for a year beginning July 1.

David and *Justine Friesen Foxall*, Bethel Church, Winnipeg, are beginning a three-year MCC term as country representatives in Chad. David served previously as an assistant in Overseas Services in MCC (Canada)'s Winnipeg office. He holds a bachelor's degree in history from the University of Calgary and a master's degree in international affairs from Carleton University, Ottawa. Justine, who has taught at Red River Community College, Winnipeg, holds a bachelor's degree in linguistics from Carleton University. Justine's parents are Henry and Henrietta Friesen of Swift Current, Sask. David's parents are George and Ruth Foxall, who work with Sudan Interior Mission in Kaduna, Nigeria.

Karen Glick-Colquitt, Bluffton (Ohio) College's director of public information since 1980, resigned May 31 to become assistant to the vice president of institutional advancement and director of public relations for Findlay (Ohio) College.

Helmut Harder, professor of theology and Christian education at Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg, has been named the school's interim president for the 1983-84 academic year.

Jorene Harder, Stirling Avenue Church, Kitchener, Ont., is beginning a 1½-year MCC assignment in Toronto as a nurse's aide. Her parents are John A. and Carrie Harder of Kitchener.

Lisa Hiebert, Aberdeen (Sask.) Church, is beginning a two-year MCC assignment in Akron, Pa., as a secretary in Material Aid. Her mother is Tina Hiebert of Aberdeen.

John Kanagy, Akron (Pa.) Church, has begun a two-year term as warehouse supervisor at the MCC SELFHELP in Ephrata, Pa. He is a graduate of Eastern Mennonite College, Harrisonburg, Va. His parents are Norman B. and Rachel Kanagy of Belleville, Pa.

Joel and *Patricia Erb Mueller*, the Assembly, Goshen, Ind., are beginning a three-year MCC term in Bolivia in family garden promotion and health. Joel holds a bachelor's degree in international rural development from Bethel College, North Newton, Kan. Patty attended the Universidad de Buenos Aires Facultad de Filosofia y Letras in Argentina and holds an associate degree in nursing from Hesston (Kan.) College and a bachelor's degree in sociology from Goshen College. His parents are Paul G. and Feidora Stucky Mueller of Halstead, Kan. Her parents are John Delbert Erb of Buenos Aires, Argentina, and the late Ruth Adeline Landis Erb.

Elaine Patkau, Hanley (Sask.) Church, is beginning a two-year MCC term as a secretary in personnel services. Her parents are Erwin and Tina Patkau of Hanley.

Dennis and *Diane Schmidt*, First Church, Newton, Kan., are on a one-year North America assignment after two years with COM in Zaire, where they have become involved in the urban ministries of Bible studies, youth work and leadership training. They also assist with purchasing for other missionaries and providing guest services. In addition to itineration, they plan to further their studies. They arrived in mid-April due to health reasons.

Ed Schmidt, First Church, Kelowna, B.C., is beginning a two-year MCC term in Warbarg, Alta., where he will work with Youth Orientation Units as a counselor, instructor and maintenance person.

Mark Sprunger, Newton, Kan., is beginning a three-year MCC term as rural savings and credit specialist in Bangladesh. He holds a bachelor's degree in economics and business administration from Bethel College, North Newton, Kan. His parents are Hugh David and Janet Clare Frost Sprunger of Kowloon, Hong Kong.

We are the government

We, the people, are the government.

We, the people, murdered Diem with a hired assassin and established a new government in Saigon by means of the CIA.

We cannot excuse our guilt by the simple fact that the Communists also commit the same crimes.

When cost overran commitment, we abandoned the government we had established.

After Vietnam—Chile and Allende.

After Chile—El Salvador.

After when—judgment? *Philip E. Friesen, Route 2, Box 18, Mountain Lake, MN 56159*

March 4

Restudy from scriptural base

I appreciated the excellent article "Impressions from a New Mennonite" by Dennis Webber (April 12 issue). I have been a GC pastor since 1947, and I can identify with Webber in many ways. I too appreciate the historical biblical foundation upon which the Mennonite faith was founded.

As one who served in two CPS camps for more than three years during World War II, my peace position and my opposition to all military and so-called defense efforts is now stronger than ever. I agree that there often is an overemphasis on peace and a neglect of emphasis on evangelism. And there is "a tendency to jump on any peace bandwagon that comes along, whether it be secular, Marxist or Christian. Many times I have seen those like myself, with more conservative views concerning peacemaking . . . ignored in favor of those who march against nuclear weapons plants. . . . I'm only asking that equally biblically based views on peacemaking not be snubbed or scoffed at."

I have often felt and still feel that there is "an intolerance or disdain for divergent views" in the General Conference, as Webber states. I also believe there are many GC Mennonites who do not agree with the popularly expressed views in published articles on various issues. I certainly feel it is true that "many GC Mennonites . . . often feel under-represented and threatened" because of their views.

I have always appreciated the GC Mennonite Church, but I feel that we need to restudy the Cornelius Ris "Mennonite Articles of Faith" and present trends in the General Conference from a scriptural base. *Herbert M. Dalke, pastor, Boynton Mennonite Church, Hopedale, IL 61747*

June 6

Dear Jerry Falwell

I watched your special, "Blessed Are the Peacemakers," on Channel 38, May 20. I am totally in disagreement with your "God and country" theology. Putting a national symbol, i.e. the Liberty Bell, on a Bible is blasphemous. However, what prompted me to write were the hermeneutical principles you used in your special. I would not bother to write about the above concerns, but when you blatantly misuse God's Word to further your ideology, I cannot keep silent.

I am appalled that you, an advocate of Christian education and training for future church leaders, would break basic rules in interpretation. If your instructors at Liberty back you up in this, my respect for your school is nil.

I refer to the two passages which you used to support your thesis of "peace through strength." The first (Matthew 12:29; Mark 3:27; Luke 11:21) about the strong man protecting his house is clearly an illustration given by Jesus in proving his point about his source of authority in casting out demons. It is not a lesson in home security. The second (1 Timothy 5:8) is teaching that parents should provide food and clothing, i.e. basic needs. Stretching this to provide rationale for bearing arms at home is not solid exegesis. Expanding the application for both of these passages to support an arms buildup for our nation represents incompetency in biblical interpretation. *Gary E. Martin, 4216 S. Washtenaw Ave., Chicago, IL 60632*

June 3

Comments on a letter

Since when do Christians try to cure an emotionally weak woman by telling her to kill one of her own children? Yet this is precisely the prescription printed in "Letters" (June 7 issue). The writer criticized Christians he labels "hypocritical" for "while saving the physical life of an unbreathing fetus they would be violating the emotional life of a suffering girl. She would not be going to an abortion clinic if she were not terribly unhappy about her condition." So we as Christians should say, "Go on, kill your own to become happy"? God forbid! *Connie Buller, 1458 Butler, Blair, NE 68008*

June 9

Service is healthy for us

Thanks for the Feb. 1 MVS issue. In this age when so many people think only of themselves, it is of vital importance that the church continually be reminded that it is called into being to serve, to be the community which actualizes God's kingdom in a hostile world. The articles included provide a beautiful portrayal of the pain, suffering, joy and growth which accompany such Christian service and kingdom building.

I also appreciated the point made in the editorial and the articles, that it is often the server who is being served. Members of our MCC team here in the Philippines often talk about how we hope our presence enriches the lives of Filipinos as much as our lives have been enriched by their presence. You are certainly right in pointing out that we must serve not only to help others but for our own sake. As you state, "Our own spiritual health is at stake."

While I believe our people should be encouraged to enter full-time Christian service, I believe it is just as important to encourage people to become involved in part-time service and volunteer work in the communities where they live. We sometimes tend to idealize and glamorize individuals who join MVS, COM or MCC, and thus fail to perceive the importance to serve others no matter where we find ourselves. *Dan Epp-Tiessen, Rodano St., Malaybalay, Bukidnon, Philippines*

June 10

Pastor needed

Bethel Bergthaler Mennonite Church
— to start late summer, if possible
— applicants should have pastoral experience and be evangelical.

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Position of youth pastor available at Foothills Mennonite Church in Calgary.

Please contact:
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Pastoral Search Committee
2115 Urbana Road, N.W.
Calgary, AB T2N 4B9.

Which is your way to protest?

Kenneth Guentert

Everybody protests in one way or another. Consumers protest the high price of beef by buying pork or chicken. Farmers protest the low price of grain by organizing a tractor convoy to Washington. Prolife advocates picket abortion clinics. Young men refuse to register for the draft.

How you protest is as much a matter of style as substance. Several people oppose nuclear weapons. The first writes a letter to his congresswoman. The second pastes "Honk if you hate nukes" on her auto bumper. The third thinks bumper stickers are tacky and sends regular contributions to the War Resisters League. The fourth refuses to pay part of his federal taxes. The fifth is a wheel in the nuclear freeze campaign. The sixth thinks that anyone who isn't in jail over the issue isn't being serious.

Where you fit in this scheme depends on your personality and circumstances. You may be tied to a family or you may be free to roam the country. You may be shy and unwilling to circulate petitions. Or you may be a ham who enjoys being on camera. You may be a lousy speaker but a good organizer. You may be a great singer of protest songs. You may have a quiet kind of courage. All of this will affect your style of protest.

There is a point where style blurs into substance. During my college years, I went to a demonstration protesting the campus presence of a recruiter for Dow Chemical, which at that time was making napalm for the Vietnam War. The protesters wanted to block the entrance to the recruiter's office but quickly became divided over the best tactic. The "sardines" wanted to lie down in a dense pack, as it were, so that job seekers would have to walk on them to get to the office. The "worms" wanted to lie down but leave a space between each body so that job hunters would not have to walk on anyone to get to the office. The sardines, of course, thought the worm tactic was purely symbolic and ineffective; the worms thought the sardine tactic was coercive and therefore a kind of violence.

How you choose to protest determines how you will interact with your government authorities and your neighbors. Should you persuade them? Coerce them? Shame them? Browbeat them? Fight them? Or kill them? Those are questions of substance, all born of style.

You will see from the following list, I hope, that part of my style is not to take even matters of substance too seriously.

Boycotts—For anyone. The boycott is a species of strike. It is the consumer's ultimate weapon. Boycotts are low risk, but they can be demanding, especially if you're boycotting a lot of things.

Bumper stickers—For those who can compress their thinking into four-inch by 12-inch spaces.

Buttons and other accessories—For those who like to wear their politics on their lapels. At the moment, buttons are out of favor, being considered superficial.

Civil disobedience—For those who want the adrenalin rush of facing tear gas, German shepherds, helmeted police or just the acute boredom of a jail sentence. For Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr., civil disobedience meant breaking the law and accepting one's punishment. For U.S. and Canadian followers, civil disobedience means breaking the law, going to trial, pleading innocent on grounds of the insanity of the accusers and the illegality of the law.

Commencement speeches—A good forum for the eloquent. First you need to get invitations. One way is to become a senior government official, get yourself arrested and sent to jail, then repent.

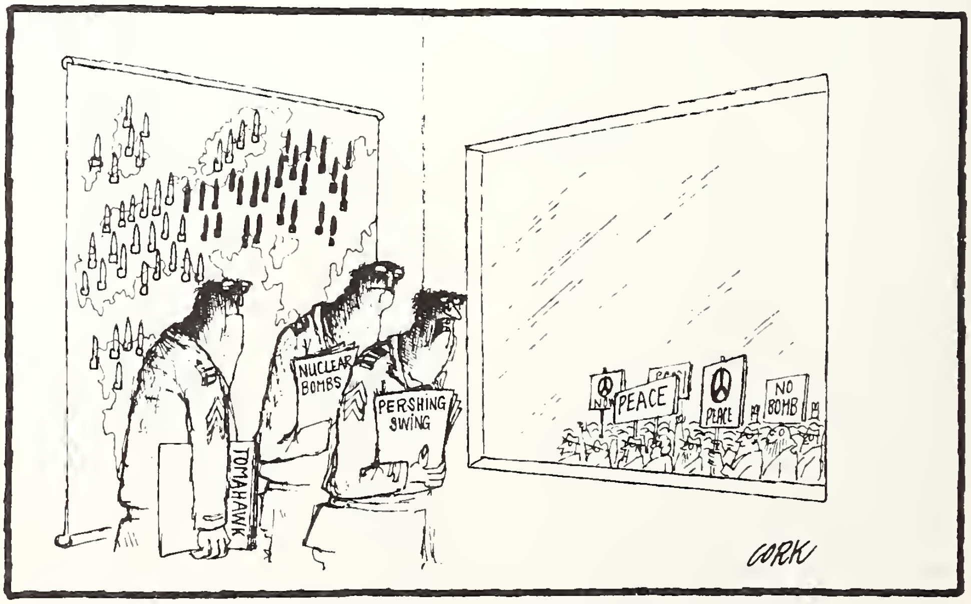
Conscientious objection—Special status for those who don't want to (or can't) obey the law but don't really want to defy the government. Governments aren't crazy about granting conscientious-objector status because people usually object only to unpleasant obligations like paying taxes or going to war. The U.S. government, for example, has traditionally allowed conscientious-objector status to draft-age men who can prove they object to all wars on religious grounds and that they are willing to spend two years of their lives emptying hospital bedpans.

Convoys—A vehicular march. Convoys work better if the vehicles themselves are a symbol—like tractors for farmers or semi-trailers for truckers.

Demonstrations, large groups—For shy people. Large demonstrations—like 500,000 gathered around the Washington Monument—often have a festival-like atmosphere. You can get lost in the crowd or wander around and watch the crazies, most of whom are harmless.

Demonstrations, small group—For extroverts. Small-group demonstrations (six people at city hall in front of TV cameras) put you on the spot. It helps to be a little obnoxious, you get more media attention. (If you're obnoxious in a large demonstration, chances are no one will notice.)

Emigration and defection—An option that comes up if, for example, the



Personally, I find all this talk about peace very dangerous. . . .

government is after your hide for evading draft registration or taxes. Also good if you've given up on the basic moral direction of the country and want to live in a righteous nation.

Explosives, faked—For those who want to make a big bang without blowing up anyone.

Explosives, real—For those who think the end justifies the means.

Fasting and abstinence—For those who want to base their protest on religious traditions. You can fast in solidarity with the hungry or to coerce someone into granting your demands. Abstinence is a species of fasting. The ancient Greek Lysistrata is famous for organizing the neighbor ladies into denying sex to their husbands until they ceased warfare.

Gestures—These break down into two categories: (1) expressions of solidarity and (2) threats. The first, like the V-sign for peace, usually look stupid. The second usually look obscene. Some gestures, like the upraised fist, look both stupid and obscene.

Getting beat up—Only for those with a large streak of masochism and enough sense to do it in front of TV cameras.

Getting loaded—For those who need to justify their consumptive existence with political idealism.

Harranguing—For extroverts with fewer rhetorical skills than commencement speakers. Every demonstration needs speakers to harrangue the crowd on the appropriate issue. Otherwise people wouldn't know which way to face.

Heckling—For extroverts, juveniles and drunks. If you have real *chutzpah*, heckle a speaker until you get forcibly removed and then claim *your* rights to free speech were violated.

Investing for social justice—For those who want to do well while doing good. If you've got a few dollars, a good heart and a basic belief in the capitalistic system, you can invest your money in a variety of socially responsible companies and mutual funds.

Jail—For the really devoted social-justice activist. Doing time is never going to be a lot of fun, but some have been at the jail game for so long they seem to have it down to a science—one parent serves time while one parent stays home with the children.

Letters to editors—Low risk. Letter writers are a breed all their own. They usually think people can be convinced by the force of logic alone (little do they know), and they spend hours a week at their chosen tactic.

Letters to legislators—Low risk. For letter writers who don't need to see their name in print. Most people write to federal legislators. Your views will have more clout with state or provincial and local legislators.

Marches—A way of protesting with your feet. See *demonstrations* and *convoys*.

Monetary contributions—For the rich, lazy and politically sensitive. Check writing is low risk and makes everyone feel better, especially the recipient.

Monkey wrench—A tactic that can range from the serious (clogging the court and jail system with multiple arrests) to the amusing. Knowing that the U.S. Selective Service System was supposed to file all relevant material, draft-age activists of the '60s used to send their draft boards subscriptions to the *New York Times*, sacred bowling balls or meditation rocks. Best recent use of the monkey-wrench tactic was by a man who announced his refusal to register for the draft. When the justice officials appeared, they found he was 81.

Non-violent resistance—High risk. Implies taking some kind of action without resorting to violence. Can include anything from refusing to register for the draft to lying down in front of bulldozers about to destroy a landmark.

Pamphleteering—Another tactic for those whose best skill is with the written word.

Petitions—Low risk, unless you're petitioning for a union in a church hospital. Circulating petitions, as opposed to signing them, is for extroverts.

Phone caller—For those who'd rather talk than write.

Pie throwing and other slapstick—For comics and extroverts. Pie throwing is rude but funnier than heckling and in the spirit of bringing low the mighty. Wouldn't it be a better world if the IRA, instead of shooting off kneecaps, hit their victims in the face with banana cream pies? And what if the PLO, instead of blowing up buses full of children, made its case by sneaking into the UN and slipping a whoopee cushion under the seat of the Israeli ambassador?

Singing—Protest songs, religious songs and just plain keeping the troops happy in the midst of big demonstrations. For those with good voices (please).

Simple living—"Live simply so that others may simply live," the slogan goes. A few hardy souls combine simple living with a kind of tax resistance by deliberately living below the taxable income.

Strikes—A time-honored tradition whose effectiveness depends on how much you're needed. High risk.

Talking weird—Whole generations learn to protest the decadence of the previous generation by speaking or writing in ways that are completely unintelligible to anyone but themselves. A tactic that seems to be spreading to such seemingly establishment groups as computer specialists, therapists and sportscasters.

Tax resistance—A form of civil disobedience that probably won't get your head bashed in. Most likely won't land you in jail, but tax resistance can be demanding.

Voting—Another time-honored tradition for maniacal middle-of-the-roaders. Don't forget local elections where your vote has more impact.

A fun solution to illiteracy

Gordon Houser

In the United States, "two out of every three children can't read, won't read or hate to read," says Jim Trelease, author of the fast-selling paperback, *The Read-Aloud Handbook* (Penguin, 1982, 223 pages). This situation is becoming critical, says Trelease, and a solution is not only foreseeable, but an enjoyable one.

Trelease, a writer and illustrator for *The Springfield (Mass.) Daily News* and a father of two, has lectured widely on children, literature and motivation. In this handbook he outlines for parents and teachers the importance of reading aloud to children and how to do it. He discusses when to begin read-aloud, the stages of read-aloud, what makes a good read-aloud, home and public libraries, television and sustained silent reading.

Trelease writes clearly and informatively, including quotes from studies on the benefits of reading aloud for children or the effects of television on learning, for instance, but he also betrays a crusader spirit that comes on a bit heavy at times.

His basic formula for getting children interested in books rather than television is as follows: (1) You read to children while they are still young enough to want to imitate what they are seeing and hearing. (2) You make sure the readings are interesting and exciting enough to hold their interest while you are building up their imaginations. (3) You keep the initial readings short enough to fit their attention spans and gradually lengthen both.

Too much emphasis has been placed on teaching children how to read, he says, rather than teaching children to want to read. And a good book read by an excited parent or teacher can't help but nourish the desire to read more. Trelease helps readers by providing an excellent annotated listing of more than 300 read-aloud favorites, including picture books, fairy tales, short and lengthier novels, poetry and anthologies. He even offers suggestions about how to obtain expensive or out-of-print books.

In his enthusiasm, Trelease makes some exaggerated points that show bad homework. For example, in discouraging television, he says that street talk is "poorly constructed and imprecise." He can discourage heavy TV use without making false statements. Nevertheless, his enthusiasm is an important element in the book and becomes infectious.

You get an idea of the timeliness of the book when you consider that Trelease earlier sold 20,000 copies of a pamphlet version of *The Read-Aloud Handbook* from his home—without advertising. My own desire to read to my son, who is at this writing 3½ months old, has been heightened. I'm eagerly watching for books that will stir his imagination and deepen his awareness of life, and my own as well.

Some do's and don'ts of read-aloud

Do:

- Begin reading to children as soon as possible. The younger the better.
- Read as often as you and the child (or class) have time for.
- Try to set aside at least one traditional time each day for a story.
- Start with picture books and build to storybooks and novels.
- Occasionally read above children's intellectual level and challenge them.
- Remember that even sixth-grade students love a good picture book now and then.
- The most common mistake . . . is reading too fast. Read slowly enough for the child to build mental pictures of what he or she just heard you read.
- Regulate the amount of time your children spend in front of the television.
- Lead by example. Make sure your children see you reading for pleasure other than at read-aloud time. Share your enthusiasm for what you are reading.

Don't:

- Don't read stories that you don't enjoy yourself.
- Don't continue reading a book once it is obvious that it was a poor choice. (You can avoid this by prereading the book.)
- Don't read above a child's emotional level.
- Don't select a book that many of the children already have heard or seen on television.
- Don't start a reading if you are not going to have enough time to do it justice.
- Don't be unnerved by questions during the reading, particularly from very young children. Answer their questions patiently. . . . There is no time limit for reading a book but there is a time limit on a child's inquisitiveness.
- Don't use the book as a threat—"If you don't pick up your room, no story tonight!"
- Don't try to compete with television. If you say, "Which do you want, a story or TV?" they will usually choose the latter. That is like saying to a 9-year-old, "Which do you want, vegetables or a donut?" Since *you* are the adult, *you* choose.

MEDITATION

Use an encouragement card

Bright, orange-yellow, long and narrow, they stuck out from the pew rack in front of me. Curious . . . I picked one up. "Encouragement Card" was inscribed in thick, black script on the upper left-hand corner. Underneath, in spidery script, the single word "Dear." A line drawing of a tall-steepled church was etched in the right-hand corner. "Therefore encourage one another and build each other up" (1 Thessalonians 5:11) was printed at the bottom edge. A few rococo curlicues framed that biblical command.

I wondered about the history of that card. How had this Mennonite church decided to stock pew racks with these cards along with the usual visitor cards and offering envelopes? Or were the cards a donation from a member who'd seen the need for the ministry of encouragement in this church? Had they come at the suggestion of the pastor?

Encouragement is an uplifting, helping ministry. How much more energized and joy-filled our churches could be if this gift was exercised more among us. The Holy Spirit wants to give this gift to each one of us.

Listen and look for something in the pastor's sermon which applies to you. Write it down. At the door tell him, "Thank you for the illustration about the faithful English teacher. That helped me to see how I can make my students think deeply about God's kind of justice." (Don't merely say, "I liked your sermon"; be specific.) If you can't take time at the door, be sure to phone later.

Tell your choir director, "That new arrangement of 'The Lord's Prayer' helped me worship God today. Thank you for choosing it."

Tell a choir member, "It was good to see you singing from the depths of your soul. You gave it all you had. It made me want to give God more of myself too."

Tell the supervisor in the nursery, "Thanks for the way you play creatively with Janelle each Sunday. She loves coming to church because of you."

Monitor your conversation at the Sunday lunch table—and every day. Is "roast preacher" ever served up, garnished with tidbits of gossip? Comments like, "Pastor James sure didn't have much to say today" or, "Did you see that Jeanne has another new suit? How can her poor husband afford it?" kill the ministry of encouragement. Choose to obey the command ". . . encourage . . . and build each other up."

Not always easy. The teenage organist started to play "Great Is Thy Faithfulness." The musical technique was correct, but the effect was timid—overly gentle. I wished he'd pull out the stops and let the notes roll and soar.

I fumbled around in my purse for a pen, started to pray for guidance and began to write, "Dear Jim."

"But you're only a visitor here . . ." a scratchy, little voice chided, "What good can you say to him?" Recognizing the dark source, I rebuked it quickly and continued to write. "I'm a visitor here this morning. It's great to see a young man like you at the organ. My ears tell me you've been a faithful music student. You're in control of that organ. Your technique is very good. I'm wondering, though, if you aren't controlling your feelings too much. When you play those great chorales of our faith, don't be afraid to let your feelings take wings and fly. Keep at it."

Ruth Klassen

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Who are we? Where are we going? Mennonites don't ask such questions very often. After all, isn't it clear that our Anabaptist beginnings are straight from Jesus' Sermon on the Mount?

This issue looks at our new life in Christ, at our third century in the United States and Canada and what are our challenges—in "protesting" (a Catholic layman looks at protest options in a somewhat lighter vein—hope we can relate to it), in encouraging and in Cuba.

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EDITORIAL

Learn some lessons from Cuba

From May 6-13 I was one of eight Associated Church Press editors on a special visit to Cuba. We wanted to learn more about the country, especially about Christians and churches in Cuba.

We arrived late Friday evening and had our first meetings Saturday morning with the board of the Cuban Ecumenical Council (CEC). Present also were press, radio and TV reporters.

At the first coffee break, Raul Suarez, executive secretary of the CEC and pastor of a Western Baptist church in Havana, asked me to preach in his church Sunday evening.

We set out for six churches on Sunday morning. Our aim was to visit as many as possible. Several people went to two different churches.

The Methodist church I attended was in a large building. It was about half full. I couldn't follow the Spanish but recognized many references to *madre* and saw all mothers called to the front for special recognition.

At the evening service in the Western Baptist church, the building was smaller but again about half full. Because of the day, I preached on Ephesians 6:1-4 and stressed our interdependence within our biological and our spiritual families. My eager, young interpreter had not done live spontaneous translation before. But it seemed to add to the celebration as two others volunteered to help. Again special favors were shown to mothers present.

They must have liked my sermon. I was requested to write it out so they could translate for circulation. Raul Suarez also came to me after the service and asked if it would be possible to send a Mennonite to preach and teach for a couple of weeks in the churches.

I'm not easily swayed by propaganda lines. My past experiences in the Soviet Union had shown me it is easy to set up "official" visits which show only what they want you to see.

Statistics given to us about pre-revolutionary conditions versus the current status made the changes look great. Upon consulting some pre-1959 literature in our public library, I generally found conditions listed as less severe than was now stated in Cuba.

In our joint statement to the Cuban press on our last evening there, we shared reservations also about the one-voice press and an economy so centrally planned.

But I came home convinced that Cuba has learned at least two things which, I believe, many GCs do not understand.

1. *The United States and Canada are distinctive nations.* Six of our eight editors were from the United States, two from Canada. Once Cubans discovered that, they inevitably made sharp distinctions in their impressions of the West. They may again have done some propagandizing, but I noticed this consistently in the Cuban press. They specified countries. When they wrote of North America, it included Canada and Mexico. When they meant specifically the United States, they said so.

Our six U.S. editors were at times embarrassed, because Cuba has much greater problems with Reagan policies than with Trudeau policies.

That makes a considerable difference also for the churches. There is no problem to receive aid and preachers from Canada, but from the United States it is illegal (a U.S. decision).

My U.S. colleagues repeatedly referred to our group as if we were all part of one nation, as do many GCs. It was hard for them to deal with there being a real difference. But it is there.

2. *There is a place for Christians in Cuba.* Most Western-trained Christian leaders left Cuba in 1959. Those who stayed have had to start almost from nothing. But they are working hard at it.

Cuba never closed the churches like the Soviet Union did. It has also allowed the seminary (Seminario Evangelico Teologico) to continue in Matanzas province. There is a good cross-section of old Western-trained leaders and new young Cubans.

The former CEC executive secretary told me there should be an MCC unit in Cuba and believes it would be possible through Canada.

There are at least two Brethren in Christ churches active in Cuba and some small house fellowships of Mennonites. I spoke to a leader of one of the latter via telephone (distance did not permit time to visit either of these groups), and he expressed interest in closer bonds.

I believe we should pursue the MCC unit in Cuba and any possibilities to teach and preach. *Bernie Wiebe*

THE MENNONITE

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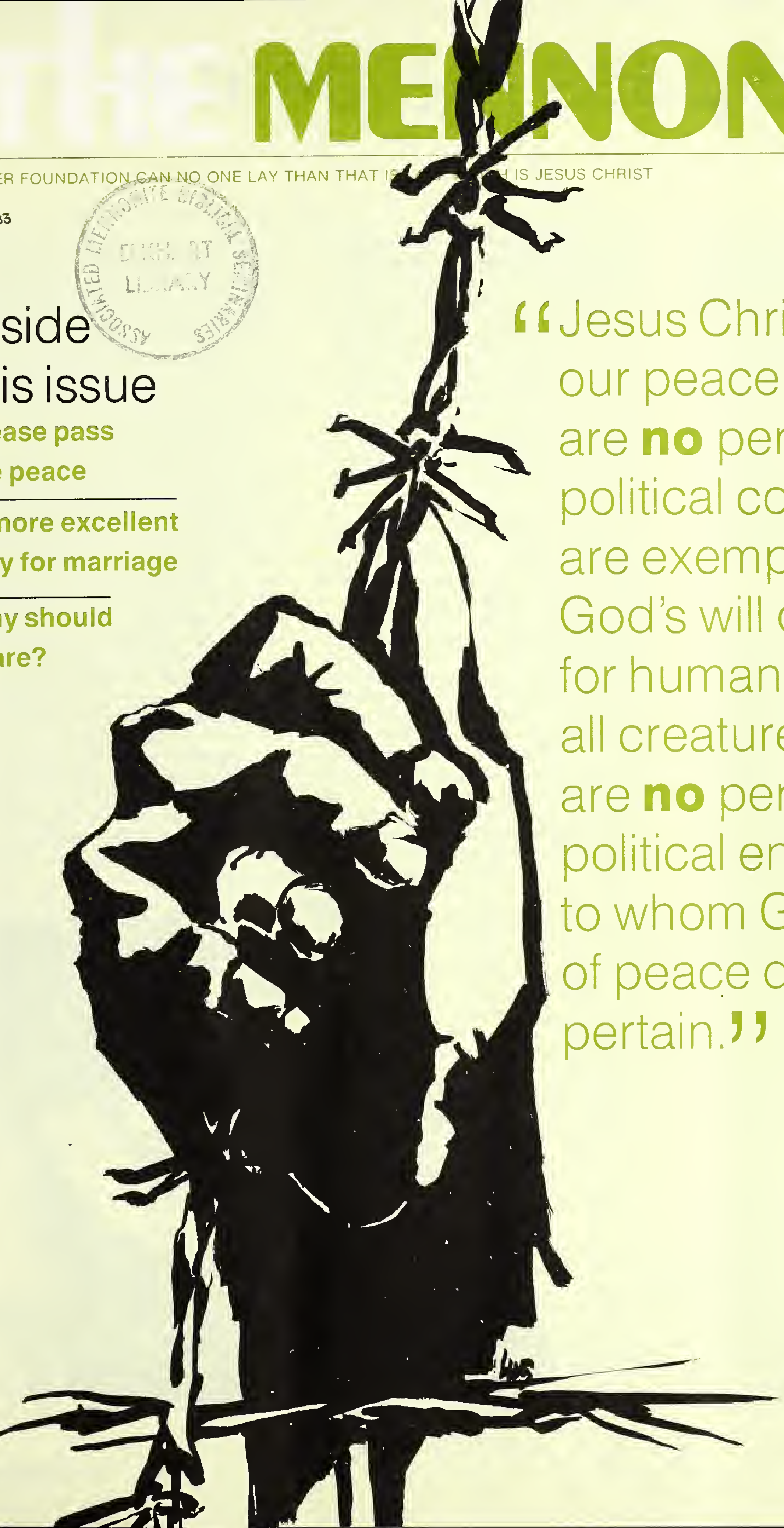


Inside this issue

Please pass the peace

A more excellent way for marriage

Why should I care?

> “Jesus Christ . . . is our peace. . . . There are **no** personal or political conflicts that are exempt from God’s will of peace for humankind and all creatures. There are **no** personal or political enemies to whom God’s will of peace does not pertain.”

Please pass the peace

The following declaration, addressed to German Christians, was issued in summer 1981 in the name of the Gesellschaft für Evangelische Theologie *(the Society for Evangelical Theology) by its executive committee, chaired by Jürgen Moltmann. The translation and the accompanying commentary are the work of Frederick Herzog, professor of systematic theology at Duke University, Durham, N.C. A prefatory note, omitted here, says the statement is intended as a contribution to the public debate in Germany on "securing and spreading peace." This article is reprinted with permission from the March 1, 1982, issue of* Christianity and Crisis, *537 West 121 St., New York, NY 10027.*

Theological statements about political processes are made in the freedom of the gospel and avail themselves of democratic rights. We resist the notion that the church should confine itself to the task of pastoral care alone. In issues of life and death for our nation, Christians, like other citizens, are not only entitled but also obligated to participate in shaping the political will of a people.

1. **Jesus Christ, as witnessed to in Holy Scripture and alive among us in the Holy Spirit, is our peace** (Ephesians 2:14). In him the eternal God reconciled the world to God (2 Corinthians 5:19). Through him God will redeem the world. Through the gospel, God lets the divine peace be proclaimed among us.

God's peace is indestructible and all-encompassing. Nothing can separate us from this peace, neither life nor death, neither political powers nor historical principalities (cf. Romans 8:38f.). God's peace passes all understanding (Philippians 4:7). God illumines and directs human reason.

There are no areas of human life where we might not be sure of God's peace. There are no personal or political conflicts that are exempt from God's will of peace for humankind and all creatures. There are no personal or political enemies to whom God's will of peace does not pertain.

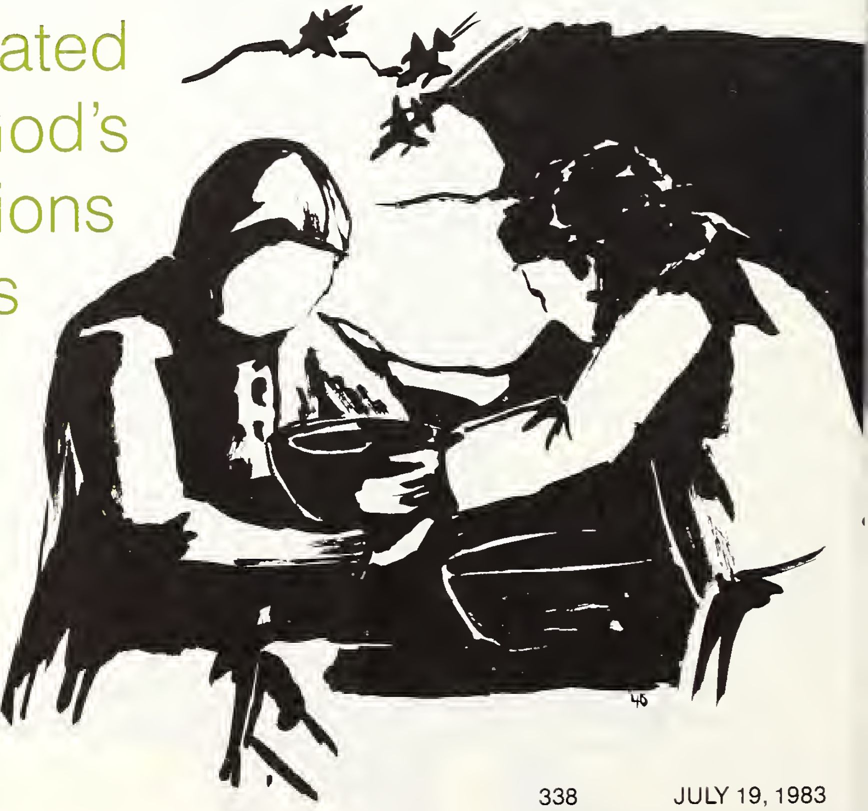
Since God personally has overcome our enmity of God and has made peace with us, we have been liberated to carry the signs of God's peace into all dimensions of life and thus to pass the peace—especially as it pertains to actual conflicts and hostilities.

God's peace prevents us from securing ourselves against our enemies by becoming *their* enemies—meeting their threats with counterthreats and their terror by our balance of terror. God's peace rather constrains us to love our enemies creatively, understanding their sufferings, critically reflecting on our own position and making every effort to de-escalate their enmity and our own enmity. Love of enemy is an expression of the superior liberty of the children of God and does not have anything to do with weakness or surrender.

2. **Jesus Christ, through his life, death and resurrection, has become our peace.** Similarly, in equally binding obligation he calls us to become his disciples: "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God" (Matthew 5:7). Since he has brought us peaceless people all to God's peace, the passing of peace becomes the content of our entire life. We remain confident that we are God's children in becoming peacemakers. We lose our confidence whenever we surrender to godless powers, historical pressures and political forces that generate strife.

The call to discipleship is the call to the community of Jesus Christ. In this community our entire life serves the passing of the peace. The shape of this life is supremely proclaimed in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7; cf. Luke 6). Since God's peace is all-encompassing, the instruction of the

> "We have been liberated to carry the signs of God's peace into all dimensions of life and thus to pass the peace . . . especially as it pertains to actual conflicts and hostilities."



Sermon on the Mount aims at all areas of life.

We therefore reject all attitudes and doctrines that limit the Sermon on the Mount to our private life in order to exempt political life from its mandates, or that regard it as pertinent only to the original circle of Jesus' disciples while relegating contemporary Christianity to rule by other laws. Discipleship of Jesus Christ happens in purity of heart with all our soul and all our might (Deuteronomy 4:4, 5; Matthew 22:37).

3. **The conscience of Christians is determined by the gospel of peace.** Through Christ we have found peace with God. In him is established our dignity, our personal identity and our moral integrity. We cannot act against our conscience without denying this dignity, identity and integrity. Thus we will politically agree to and support whatever corresponds to God's peace. We must politically contradict whatever interferes with this peace and what opposes it.

Christians are responsible to their state. But there is a limit to this responsibility, if a state is ruled contrary to the elementary injunctions of the Sermon on the Mount. In that instance the Christian is obligated to refuse and to resist.

4. **The modern weapons of mass destruction not only pose a deadly threat for humankind and all of life on earth, they also threaten us with immeasurable guilt.**

We therefore repeat and affirm the Theological Declaration of the *Bruderschaften* of Oct. 4, 1958: "The inclusion of weapons designed for mass destruction in the verbal threat and practical use of national power involves actual denial of the will of God offering grace to all creation and humankind. Such action is unchristian. The stance of neutrality in what we have recognized as sin is irreconcilable with our confession of Jesus Christ."

If the use of weapons designed for mass destruction is sinful, the possession thereof as threat and deterrent also cannot be justified in Christian terms. Since the threat is effective only if one is willing to make it real, already the threat of weapons for mass destruction has to be regarded as sinful.

The present destructive power of these weapons has clearly transcended the limit of political accountability for war and the use of the threat of war. Any military threat or altercation that might escalate into worldwide atomic war is irresponsible.

The escalation of nuclear armament contemplated today threatens us more than ever before. We thus insist on immediate and binding disarmament negotiations between the superpowers. We support a European disarmament conference with the declared aim of establishing a free zone void of weapons for mass destruction. We support gradual disarmament in conventional weapons and the buildup of comprehensive cooperation in Europe, especially in regard to economic justice. We support the peace movement in our country.

5. **Peace service (Friedensdienst) is the content of life in the community of Jesus Christ.** Church institutions and organizations will want to support this peace service and give shape to it. Peace service alive in congregations and supported by church leadership will stress the following mandates: (a) *Learning and sharing love of enemy:* Wars are predicated on friend-enemy dualisms. Artificially concocted enemy images exploit fears and foster aggressions. Psychological warfare makes human beings and peoples disregard life and prepare death. Love of enemy demands scaling down these images and overcoming the fears and aggressions they produce.

Whenever fear of the enemy guides politics, peace is threatened not only in foreign affairs but also in domestic affairs. The loyalty of citizens to duly elected government here is no longer attained by exercise of the mandate to govern but by the spreading of fear, either of the enemies of the state or of those alleged to be enemies. Spreading of psychological disturbance and public suspicion will result. Yet whoever wants to be engaged in "passing the peace" has to resist the exploitation and production of fears in our nation.

Sober, historical and political analyses can liberate us also from irrational Russo-phobia and Communist-phobia and enable us to engage in concrete political give-and-take.

(b) *Recognizing the true dangers and cooperating in overcoming them:* While the superpowers again take up their East-West conflict, escalating it, they suppress the much more dangerous North-South conflict and the threat of ecological catastrophe. The price for a politics of armament escalation will have to be paid by the Third World, which will become subject to further exploitation. Even now the poor are paying for the armament of the rich. Even now human beings in the Third World are paying with their lives for the arms race. Even now time, intelligence and capital are wasted on weapons of mass destruction and are not being used for overcoming hunger in the world. Peace service of Christians will thus consist in raising public consciousness of the North-South conflict and in becoming advocates of the silent and dying people of the earth.

(c) *Exemplifying border-transcending peace:* In order to make visible the border-transcending peace at the East-West border there ought to be annual simultaneous and if possible common church peace weeks in the Federal Republic of Germany and the German Democratic Republic. The churches in the Federal Republic and the German Democratic Republic here may realize a common task.

(d) *Expanding and organizing peace service without weapons:* Peace service without weapons is the direct and unequivocal sign of Christian peace service. Thus the derogatory designation *Wehrdienstverweigerer* (conscientious objector; literally, a person refusing military service) ought to disappear. The "formation of international peace services," (*"Aktion Suhnezeichen"*) for instance, as recommended by the *Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland* in 1959 dare no longer be postponed. We suggest cooperation with the peace service of the historical peace churches, especially the Mennonite peace service.

(e) *Becoming a peace church:* The more the *Evangelische Kirche* changes from a *state-bound church* to a *free church* the clearer its peace witness and the more unequivocal its engagement for peace can become. We believe that the *Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland* can become a peace church without sectarian withdrawal from the world. It will become a peace church to the extent that it confesses Christ and Christ *alone* as its peace and as the peace of the whole world and acts upon the inevitable results of this confession. •

A more excellent way for marriage

Ronald S. Kraybill

"More church fellowship, not less, is the goal."

No escape from the problem. Troubled marriages and divorce are an inescapable reality in most congregations today. In living rooms, pastors' studies and church council meetings much anguished discussion is occurring as congregations struggle to find answers for questions that scarcely existed, or at least rarely found expression, 20 years ago. Answers, it is obvious, have been slow in appearing, and many congregations seem almost desperate for help.

Sooner or later, every congregation faces a specific situation involving a troubled marriage or divorce. It will be a rare congregation that does not sometime in the next year encounter one or more of the following situations: (1) An individual who has been previously divorced applies for membership. No one in the congregation knows much about the history of this individual. He or she indicates a willingness to discuss the past, but only in a setting of confidentiality. Who will do this and what should be the criteria for offering membership? (2) A single member in the congregation begins dating a divorced non-member. (3) Several couples encounter persistent difficulties in their marriages. (4) A couple announces their intention to divorce—all efforts at reconciliation have proved futile, they insist. (5) A member divorced in uncertain circumstances five years ago asks to remarry in the congregation.

Balancing grace and accountability. The congregation needing to respond to any of these situations faces a difficult challenge. What do you do when you believe in grace, forgiveness and freedom from the past, but you also wish to uphold accountability—to God and to the marriage covenant? Laying out general principles about the sanctity of marriage and the inadvisability of divorce is not difficult. But the situations congregations face are rarely clear cut. What were or are the circumstances of a divorce? For both Jesus and Paul circumstances made a difference. Is there repentance of past wrongs? Will the church's response only bring further alienation?

Responses to problems. Various responses have appeared in recent years as congregations have struggled with problems related to marriage and divorce. Some congregations have conducted lengthy studies, ending with a written document outlining a congregational "position" or "guidelines." Regional conferences have in some areas issued written guidelines for pastors. Here and there throughout the country congregations have formed ad hoc committees to make decisions or recommendations about specific situations.

This article focuses on the experience of two congregations in which ad hoc efforts have grown to become an active, permanent part of congregational life. The marriage reconciliation committee which functions in these congregations is a biblical and practical response to disrupted marriages. This article draws largely on the experiences of the Akron (Pa.) Mennonite Church, which began serious study of the issue of divorce, remarriage and membership in 1974 and established a formal committee in 1979. To a lesser extent, this article also draws on the experiences of the Blooming Glen (Pa.) Mennonite Church, which established a permanent committee in 1977 at the pioneering initiative of member Abe Schmidt, a professional marriage counselor. (Schmidt is collaborating with his wife, Dorothy, on a forthcoming book entitled *When Congregations Care About Divorce and Remarriage*. It is based on their experiences with the Blooming Glen committee.)

The task of a marriage reconciliation committee is (1) to work sensitively with individuals applying for membership who have experienced divorce, (2) to provide support for marriages in trouble within the congregation, (3) to encourage preventative measures in the congregation that will in the long term support healthy marriages.

Work with individuals previously divorced. If someone previously divorced applies for membership or if a divorced member seeks remarriage, that individual is asked to meet with the marriage reconciliation committee. What does the committee look for? One committee member summarized the concerns of the committee in this discussion as (a) closure, (b) learnings and (c) dialogue. Concern for closure means that where divorce is already a fact, the committee attempts to make sure that individuals are not harboring a deep well of bitterness against former spouses. Are they ready to forgive wrongs that have been done to them and seek forgiveness for wrongs that they have done to others so that the past can definitely be left behind? If individuals coming for membership are separated but not yet divorced, the committee is concerned that potential members have done everything within their power to reconcile the marriage.

"We also encourage people to consider what they have learned through their marriage breakup," commented a committee member. "It is important to us to know that potential members have a sense of what went wrong with their former relationships." One committee which felt that an applicant for membership had not faced up to the lessons of his marriage breakup asked the member to spend several sessions with a marriage counselor before joining the congregation.

Concern about openness to dialogue means for this committee that in the words of one member, "We are concerned that people coming for membership are not simply fleeing accountability in other congregations. It is important to us to know that anyone coming into our congregation is committed to taking the church seriously and will maintain open and supportive relationships in our fellowship."

Confidentiality is essential in these discussions. "It is crucial that we have the power to speak for the congregation and that the congregation be willing to accept without question our recommendations to them," noted a committee member. "Unless the congregation is willing to place that authority and trust in us, it is impossible to assure potential members the total confidentiality necessary for good discussion." After the committee has met with an individual for one or several sessions and is convinced he or she is ready for membership, the committee recommends him or her to the congregation for membership.

One Sunday morning I witnessed a report from the marriage reconciliation committee to the Akron congregation regarding the proposed remarriage of a formerly divorced member. The chairperson stated briefly that the individual

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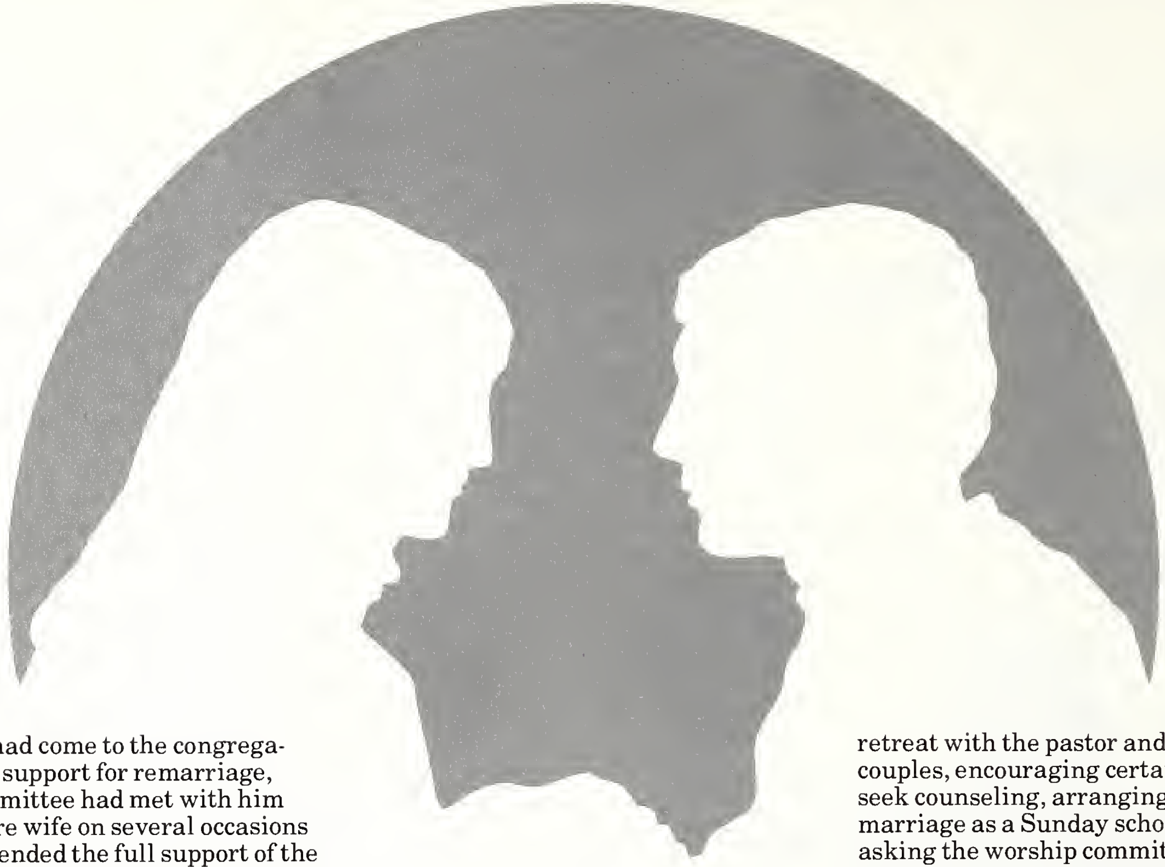

in question had come to the congregation seeking support for remarriage, that the committee had met with him and his future wife on several occasions and recommended the full support of the congregation for marriage. As a listener, I was impressed with the sense of warmth and accountability which surrounded the announcement. It seemed clear that the committee was not simply "rubber-stamping" a request for marriage, they felt a serious responsibility to reflect honestly with this couple on their readiness for remarriage. On the other hand I detected no indications of meddlesomeness; the committee had undertaken discussion in a spirit that conveyed respect and welcomed trust.

Working with troubled marriages. The second area of responsibility for marriage reconciliation committees is working with marriages in trouble in the congregation. The Akron committee avoids the role of counselor but helps couples find a suitable counselor. The committee formed a marriage support group and encouraged couples experiencing marriage problems to meet weekly with this group for several months. The congregation paid for part of the therapist's bill. "We had to tap some people on the shoulder to attend that," recalls one committee member. The committee asked the pastor, also a committee member, to approach several couples whom they knew to be experiencing problems. Some declined, but others agreed.

On occasion divorce occurs despite the best efforts to preserve the marriage covenant. Should the parties be treated as sinners in need of confrontation for their hardness of heart or as victims of human limitations in need of release from the past and a clean chance to try again? Situations vary; likewise appropriate responses. Whatever the situation, individuals experiencing divorce face a difficult future. They need the warmth and the firm nurturing of the community of grace. They need strength to confront their own failure and to forgive the wrongs of another. The marriage reconciliation committee aims to make the best of human tragedy by providing warmth, firm nurture and strength. It is the task of the committee to see to it that individuals losing a spouse in the dark valley of divorce do not needlessly lose their spiritual community as well. *More* church fellowship, not less, is the goal.

Maintain healthy marriages. A third function of marriage reconciliation committees is *preventive*. The Akron Church committee considers this the most significant part of their function. This committee has felt it particularly important to help couples examine their marriages and pinpoint strengths and weaknesses. They have done this in a variety of ways, scheduling a weekend retreat with the pastor and his wife for couples, encouraging certain couples to seek counseling, arranging seminars on marriage as a Sunday school option, asking the worship committee to plan for occasional sermons on marriage, encouraging the Christian education committee to keep family and marriage concerns in the Sunday school curriculum, and drawing attention of the congregation to library resources for healthy marriages.

The Akron committee also believes strongly that premarriage counseling is crucial. In collaboration with the pastor, this committee has drawn up a set of written guidelines requiring a minimum of three counseling sessions with the pastor for any couple seeking marriage in the congregation. The committee encourages the pastor to recommend additional professional counseling when he judges this advisable. One year after the wedding, either the pastor or the committee attempts to contact newlyweds for a "checkup on marital health."

In any troubled relationship there are few easy answers. Likewise for disrupted marriages. The one answer that is clearly wrong is to do nothing, to wait until problems force a belated or reluctant response. The marriage reconciliation committee offers one biblical and practical way to face squarely the reality of marriage problems in the church. More importantly, it stands as a positive commitment, a statement of support for both the sanctity of lifelong marriage and the reality of grace that covers even the most painful human failures. •

God separated the seasons

Ken Peterson

Sunrise . . . sunset . . . sunrise . . . sunset . . . day and then night . . . day and then night . . . recurring endlessly from time's beginning. Springtime . . . summertime . . . fall and then winter. Year after year the theme recurs—one season follows another.

The seasons continually repeat themselves in a dependable pattern upon this special planet, Earth. We live in a universe of predictable stability. "Great is thy faithfulness, O God, our Father." We can count on the God of all seasons as God's solar clock keeps running.

Even the plants can read God's solar clock. The grass knows when to green in spring. The crops know summer is for growing and fall is for ripening. The grain knows that winter is for dying but spring is again for living.

The beautiful vegetation knows the clock of the seasons. It also knows the Creator's clock of day and night. The yellow evening primrose opens only at dusk, so swiftly it can be seen and heard. The buds sound like popping soap bubbles as they burst. The leaves of the mallow weed, as those of many other plants, actually follow the movement of the sun's light, turning with it as it moves across the sky. But as soon as the sun sets, all the mallow weed's leaves turn around and face the east, where the sun will rise the next morning.

The primitive earth is thought to have been covered with a blanket of clouds in the atmosphere. The early terrestrial atmosphere would have had little free oxygen. The oxygen would have been locked up in carbon dioxide. As a result, the atmosphere would have been more effective in trapping heat from the sun, creating the greenhouse effect of a thick cloud covering the earth. The clouds would have made it impossible to see the sun, the moon and the stars from the earth, though diffused sunlight would have reached the surface. The vast amount of vegetation began to release oxygen into the atmosphere, decreasing the cloudy greenhouse, lowering the temperature and clearing the atmosphere for the appearance of the sun, moon and stars—the birth of our seasons, and day and night.

The time of the seasons is determined by the tilting of Earth on its axis as it makes its yearly journey around the sun. The seasons change because various places on Earth receive different amounts of sunlight at certain times of the year. When the North Pole tilts toward the sun, the Northern Hemisphere has the warm sunshine season of summer. When the North Pole tilts away from the sun, then the Northern Hemisphere has the windy cold of winter. As the North Pole moves between its summer and winter positions, we have the fruit of fall and the flowers of spring.

The truth of the seasons reveals that God is dependable. If there were a permanent drop of just 1.6 to 2 percent in the sun's energy reaching Earth, continental snow would advance to the equator, and the oceans would freeze. We are at just the right distance from the sun for the seasons to dependably recur year after year, century after century.

God has positioned Earth in the solar system and providentially given us the tilt of our axis, the revolving of our planet and the rotation about the sun—perfectly—to give us the dependability of our seasons and the dependability of daytime activity and nighttime rest. Our life on this special planet is dependable because of the seasons—given by our faithful Creator.

When we are tempted to worry, when problems seem insurmountable, when uncertainty clouds our moments, we can look to the seasons to regain our confidence in the dependability of life. As God has given us the reliable seasons, we can be certain God will care for us in the spring of our childhood, in the summer of our youth, in the fall of our middle years and the winter of old age. In every recurring season our God is present and caring. *Seventh in a series on Genesis*

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Why should I care?

Byron Becker

Mennonites are known as a people concerned with the needs of the world. We say this is because of our commitment to a discipleship that means doing as well as believing. But if someone (our youth, for instance) would press us on the matter, could we illustrate our vision of discipleship with examples of some general, biblical principles?

Here are three biblical principles I have found helpful. (One of my current concerns is world hunger, so I will often use related illustrations.)

1. **God identifies with the hungry.** " 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty? . . . When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes . . . sick or in prison and go to visit you?' The King will reply, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me' " (Matthew 25:37-40).

Walking down the streets of Haiti several summers ago, I found it difficult to look into the eyes of the beggars asking for a few pennies to buy some bread. It was much easier to look across the street or straight ahead and hurry by. As a "poor" college student, I "needed" all the money I had.

My looking the other way would have been nearly impossible if I had read Matthew 25 during my devotional time that morning. Instead of seeing a lazy panhandler out for an easy buck as I looked into the eyes of a beggar, I would have met the eyes of Jesus Christ. Turning away from the outstretched hand of a needy Haitian is one thing, turning away from the outstretched hand of the Lord is another. The two actions are really one and the same.

In this teaching, Jesus shows how God identifies with the hungry, the poor, the prisoners—all those people at the bottom of our society. He identifies with those in need as two people identify with each other in marriage; they "become one flesh" (Genesis 2:24). Thus, the way we treat one is the way we treat the other, like in a marriage. If we can give one spouse a raise, both the husband and the wife benefit. If one spouse is fired, both suffer.

So it is with God and the hungry. When we turn away a hungry person, we turn away both a brother or sister and our Lord.

2. **Called to be children of God.** "If you lend to those from whom you hope to receive, what thanks can you expect? . . . Lend without any hope of return. You will have a great reward, and you will be (children) of the Most High. . ." (Luke 6:34-35).

When you have a father or mother you think a lot of, one of the neatest things is to hear someone say that you are a "chip off the ol' block." But a compliment like that is worth infinitely more if it is made with reference to our Heavenly Parent. What an honor to be a "chip off the heavenly block."

If we lend to the poor, the hungry, those who probably won't be able to pay us back; if we are peacemakers, turning the other cheek, loving our enemies, then we are not only called the children of God, we *are* the children of God (Luke 6:27-35; Matthew 5:9, 43-48).

Children of God linked with justice issues can also be found in the Old Testament. In the time of the prophets Amos and Hosea, Israel was prosperous, but it was at the expense of the hungry and poor. Social justice was at an all-time low. Hosea said that "there is no fidelity, no tenderness, no knowledge of God in the country, only perjury and lies, slaughter, theft. . ." (4:2). And Amos said that the people of Israel "sell the righteous for silver, and the needy for a pair of sandals. They trample the heads of the poor. . ." (2:6-7).

A Haitian girl savors a midday meal.

Part of God's response to the lack of concern for the poor and hungry was to have Hosea name his son "Not-My-People" as a symbol, saying "You are not my people and I am not your God" (Hosea 1:9). But then God envisions a change of heart in Israel, saying, "I will say to those called 'Not-My-People,' 'You are my people'; and they will say, 'You are my God' " (Hosea 2:23).

In my relations to the hungry, I want to be a child of God, enabling God to say, "You are my people."

3. **God's economic order.** "All the believers were one in heart and mind. No one claimed . . . possessions . . . his own, but they shared everything they had. . . . There were no needy persons among them" (Acts 4:32-34).

This past year I have learned firsthand how wise the early church was in its economic order. In our household of eight, we share many (but not all) things in common. Instead of eight subscriptions to *The Mennonite*, we only need one; instead of five stereos, we have two; instead of five 10-pound bags of flour, we get one 50-pound bag at a cheaper price.

One of the benefits of this lifestyle is more resources available for "feeding the hungry."

Throughout history God has introduced a number of economic models that show his concern for the poor. The early church shared their property; Jesus and his disciples had a common purse for their provisions and sharing with the poor and hungry (John 13:29). In the Old Testament, God set the standard of tithing to "the sojourner, the fatherless and the widow" so they could "eat and be filled" (Deuteronomy 14:29), and called for returning of property to its original families every 50 years so the means of food production and wealth could not be permanently lost (Leviticus 25).

The exact method is not important; it *is* important that we find some way of systematically making the gulf between rich and poor, the well-fed and the hungry, narrower. This is so important to God that he provides many economic models that can help and punishes the rich who stand in the way (e.g. Luke 1:46-53; Jeremiah 22:13-19).

I hope I will be able to apply more and more ways to distribute the wealth of God's good creation more equally among the rich and the poor, the well-fed and the hungry. But to do this, I must learn to identify with the people of the world as God identifies with them and to recognize that I am being called to become a child of God as defined by Jesus Christ.

Introducing *If We Can Love*

Erland Waltner

Sometimes I have fantasized about getting in on a real scoop, like a newscaster getting to read the president's speech before it is given, or the pollster being able to call the outcome of an election before all the ballots have been cast. I felt that I experienced something like that when Carl Good (director of Mennonite Mental Health Services) asked me to read the galley proofs of the new book *If We Can Love: The Mennonite Mental Health Story*, edited by Vernon Neufeld, published by Faith and Life Press.

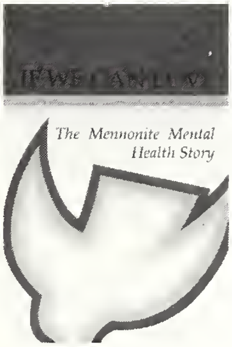
A story it is, a good story, and in some ways a great story.

It is a warmly *human* story which goes back to Civilian Public Service days when some 1,500 "Mennos" worked in mental hospitals instead of serving in the military; people "who were neither angels nor beasts," as Paul Pruyser puts it, and began what was to revolutionize the treatment of the mentally ill in this country.

It is a pioneering *faith* story of people like Henry A. Fast and Elmer Ediger and Art Jost and Howard Musselman, who saw visions and dreamed dreams about better answers to mental health needs.

It is a moving *love* story, as the title of the book suggests, taken from a quotation of Karl Menninger saying that "love is the key" to modern psychiatric programs in the psychiatric hospital.

It is a delightful *family* story, a kind of family album, portraying roots (Alex Haley style) going back to Russia and Canada (Bethania and Bethesda) and moving out to Paraguay (Hoffnungsheim). It speaks of a family trunk (Mennonite Central Committee, then Mennonite Mental Health Services), parent agencies, with the development of separate and unique centers across the continent: Brook Lane, Kings View, Philhaven, Prairie View, Penn Foundation, Oaklawn, Kern View and Eden—eight offspring which together represent over half of the church-related mental health hospitals/centers in the United States and Canada.



It is a dramatic *success* story, with humble beginnings, a great deal of struggle, considerable conflict, and even suspense, but beginning to make a significant impact on the treatment of mental illness across the continent as affirmed by the four testimonies of nationally esteemed mental health professionals included in the book.

From another perspective it is an *inside* story, written and edited by people who were and are on the inside as administrators and developers, plus a few others whom they took with them behind the scenes.

It is a researched story, a *documented* story. Vernon Neufeld has done an excellent job in shaping and editing this volume. No one writing in this area from here on can ignore this book, which is foundational and seminal.

It is an *unfinished* story, with its past, its present and its future. How the future will go depends on those who now build on the foundations already laid.

It is a *unique* story which combines many complex factors—theological, ecclesiastical, professional, psychological and sociological—where there are many ambiguities and where glib responses are likely deficient, which help us to see more than institutions and, in a dialogue of church and clinic, help us to struggle with what it means to love the mentally ill in the name of Christ.

The book has many items of enticing human interest: how patient care at Brook Lane once cost $3.50 per person per day, how conflicts over locations were resolved in boards and in communities, how psychiatrists and pastors were a threat to each other, how the debates over the appointment and role of chaplains unfolded, how governance moved from dependence (on MCC and MMHS) to independence and now interdependence, how treatment patterns changed from electro and other shock therapies to drug therapy and on to more wholistic approaches, how there was fuss over the high salaries of some psychiatrists when they were working alongside volunteers.

I valued especially the section on "what we have learned" about organization, therapy, church relations and funding.

I commend to you this story. Your church library should have a copy. Your community library should have one. Your own family may want one. Certainly your educational institutional libraries must each have one.

The Mennonite Mental Health Story is our story. It is the kind of story which makes us feel good about ourselves being a part of it.

It is also in a profound sense a part of God's story, working out love through people.

Erland Waltner, executive secretary of the Mennonite Medical Association, 3003 Benham Ave., Elkhart, IN 46517, introduced the MMHS book at the MHA convention in San Diego.

Voluntary service positions available Sept. 1

Maintenance supervisor—plumbing and electrical experience, grounds and building maintenance, supervisory scheduling, housekeeping

Office manager—typing, filing, registrations, telephone, mailing list maintenance

Maintenance helper—mowing, housekeeping, maintenance tasks

For further information contact:
Robert O. Bertsche, director
Camp Friedenswald Inc.
15406 Watercress Drive
Cassopolis, MI 49031
Phone 616/476-2426.

Executive secretary

Congregational Resources Board
Conference of Mennonites in Canada

Responsibilities include coordinating CRB programs and staff (program areas are in education, missions and evangelism and social concerns), responsibilities in relating to congregations, pastors and their needs.

Position available on Sept. 1

Apply or inquire to:
Larry Kehler, general secretary
Conference of Mennonites in Canada
600 Shaftesbury Blvd.
Winnipeg, MB R3P 0M4.

Bible societies around the world distributed 484,633,537 Bibles, Testaments, Portions and Selections in 1982. This represents a 9.1 percent increase over 1981's figures and includes 10,883,159 Bibles, 12,177,593 Testaments, 32,575,846 Portions and 428,996,939 Scripture Selections. Good News for New Readers Scriptures, a graded approach to Scriptures for first readers, are now available in languages spoken in 70 different countries. New Reader translations have been completed in 380 languages to date and are in progress in another 68 languages.

Worldwide Mennonite membership is placed at 698,300 in the Mennonite and Brethren in Christ World Directory for 1983, released in June by Mennonite World Conference. The directory reveals the existence of 130 Mennonite and BIC "groups or organized bodies" in 52 countries. The 1982 figures were 689,500 members, in 125 groups, in 50 countries. Figures by continent are as follows: North America—329,600; Asia and Africa—each 102,300; Europe—94,600; Central and South America—69,400; Australia—100. More than half live outside North America.

NEWS

Nicaragua: struggling for a better life

Editor's note: This is the second of two interpretive articles on Nicaragua.

> The reconstruction is not continuing at the expected pace. The development process is delayed, for the period of emergency is not yet passed.—*Nicaraguan Mennonite involved in community development work*

Managua, Nicaragua (MCC)—There are problems in Nicaragua; deep problems inherited from centuries of oppression, inequity and underdevelopment. Some are based on the youth and inexperience of a government ambitious enough to try to correct history, thereby taking on the risk of hard-to-fulfill promises and overextension. But many are also aggravated by U.S. hostility.

The observer asking, Are the poor better off? can find the answer he or she wants.

There are clearly far more services—rural teachers, utilities for poor neighborhoods, a national system of health clinics. However, a lack of hard currency too often causes a shortage of textbooks and medicines.

A system for rationing basic food products and soap keeps prices within reach of all, but the resulting increase of consumption by most has meant spot shortages for some.

Land reform is helping many small farmers while laying the foundations for future prosperity. But controlled prices discourage some producers.

These problems are natural results for any government trying to promote the well-being of the majority while slighting the fewest possible. When analyzing the Sandinistas' management record on economics, one needs to consider the regional economic scene, worldwide commodity prices and the availability of credit—none of which is favorable and each of which is made worse by U.S. attempts to isolate Nicaragua economically.

Unfortunately military preparation, mobilization and conflict siphon even more resources and human power away from productive activities. The Sandinistas expected aggression from members of Somoza's former National Guard and the United States, and they have prepared for it by building their forces beyond previous levels.

Without defending revolutionary glorification of the machine gun, it does seem clear that the Sandinista Army and militias have an essentially defensive posture. They have anti-aircraft weapons, not planes; machine guns and mortars, not bombs.

Sandinista soldiers at one of Nicaragua's most vulnerable border zones point across the Honduran mountains to the locations of counterrevolutionary camps: "We know where they are. There is no lack of desire or ability to go up and clean them out." The government seems almost desperate to avoid war with Honduras, since that could ignite regional war.

The most obvious stain on the Sandinista Revolution is their treatment of the indigenous Miskitos of the isolated Atlantic zone. During the first year of the revolution, a series of incidents led to an alienation between the Miskitos and the Sandinistas. Miskitos were forced to relocate in camps further away from the border and several thousand fled into Honduras as a result of persecution by the Sandinista government. The Sandinista government later acknowledged their mistakes in dealing with the Miskitos.

Regarding the relationship between the Miskitos and the Sandinista government, the opinion of the leadership of the Moravian Church, to which most Miskitos belong, is that

> the Sandinistas have made the same mistakes that governments and missionaries throughout the Americas have often made in their relations

Approximately 5,000 U.S.-backed guerrillas are invading Nicaragua from Honduras, to the north, and Costa Rica, south.

Songfest '83, sponsored by the Alberta Mennonite Youth Organization, was held in Tofield, Alta., June 10-12. Churches of the Conference of Mennonites in Alberta participated. With the theme "Rejoice" the songfest featured children's choirs and church choirs with youth and adults together. Lori McCoy conducted a children's mass choir and Leonard Ratzlaff a youth and adult mass choir. Both live in Edmonton. An arts and crafts display included paintings, metal work, embroidery, crewel, afghans and woodwork. A horseshoe tournament also took place. Meals were served at the Tofield Mennonite Church.

Christian Initiative for Peace, a newly formed group consisting of 33 people from Toronto's Catholic, United and Mennonite churches, meets one morning each week "to pray and plan for peace." In late May, 12 members of the group spent three days in Ottawa. They held prayer vigils outside the embassies of the United States and the Soviet Union, had meetings with representatives of both embassies as well as with over 30 Members of Parliament, and urged the Canadian government not to test the cruise missile nor to give grants to industries for weapons production.

Loneliness draws people to cults, asserts an authority on cults. Rabbi Maurice Davis of White Plains, N.Y., says that after interviewing about 400 ex-members of cults, he found that it is not the theology or technique of the cults that attracts followers but companionship.

> with native populations; the pressures and publicity focused on the area have only hindered church and community efforts to work out their own economic, political and cultural problems with the government in an atmosphere of loyal criticism. . . .

No one is claiming that the Sandinistas have achieved model democracy or a socialist utopia, much less the kingdom of God. But if they have achieved a basically good government in spite of external pressures, their own inexperience and the region's penchant for policies favoring the few, that is remarkable enough.

Alfonso Robelo, opposition leader based in Costa Rica, is one of the "good guys" working to overthrow the Sandinista National Liberation Front. He was an opponent of Somoza, originally a member of Nicaragua's governing junta, and now an ally of Somocista counterrevolutionaries largely due, according to the *Washington Post*, to pressure from the CIA, which hopes to legitimize the brutal Somocistas. He says, "It appears that we have to put up with 50,000 more deaths in order to have the right to look for dialogue."

But how bad would Sandinista rule have to be to justify the loss of as many lives as it took to oust the nearly half-century-old Somoza dynasty? The question might at least prompt American policy makers to pause long enough to consider the sheer human cost of their gambles.

Present U.S. policy toward Nicaragua, after all, suggests costly scenarios:

- A takeover, however unlikely, by counterrevolutionary forces. Their current treatment of civilians showing any Sandinista sympathies hardly prompts confidence in their commitment to the kind of tolerance necessary for any coalition government, which the Reagan administration would like to see established.
- A regional war, risking direct involvement by the United States.
- Pushing the Sandinistas until something snaps and they stop discriminating between violent and constructive opposition.
- A generation of indecisive unrest, sapping Nicaragua and its neighbors of the creativity to build peaceful and just solutions to the common problems of underdevelopment.

With a change of heart, there could be one more scenario. There is still the opportunity to join with both Nicaragua and the United States' more enlightened, reform-minded allies, in negotiating an end to the killing and in establishing peaceful relationships with non-aligned Third World nations. *Gerald Schlabach*

Gay concerns council issues critique of sexuality statement

Newton, Kan.—The Brethren/Mennonite Council for Gay Concerns, an advocacy group based in Washington, has issued a lengthy analysis and response to the draft statement on "Human Sexuality in the Christian Life," prepared by a joint Mennonite Church/General Conference committee for discussion at Bethlehem '83.

The 26-page response, prepared at the request of BMC by John Linscheid, pastor of the Lawrence (Kan.) Mennonite Fellowship, charges that the statement and study process "is one which tends to focus on homosexuality as a problematic behavior which needs to be addressed," rather than one which attempts "to open up and maintain healthy dialogue among differing brothers and sisters. . . ."

The council's chief criticism of the document is its lack of "mutual exhortation and discernment." In his introduction, Linscheid writes, "The history of the study process threatens to undermine the committee's well-intentioned desire for this to be a mutual discernment process. In the General Conference Mennonite Church the call was for a study of 'homosexuality within the context of human sexuality.' That call was in response to several proposals to condemn homosexuality. The milieu of church politics that the General Conference environment brings to the study process . . . tends to see the study of human sexuality as merely a way to put that discussion in context.

"The history of the study in the Mennonite Church reflects a similar bias," the response says. "In fact, the [Mennonite Church General] Board very nearly obviated any possibility of mutual discernment by, in essence, dictating the conclusions of the study before the study began."

The BMC critique claims that the committee's closed process has resulted in a flawed, one-sided statement. "Reading the draft has been disappointing and painful. Alternate biblical and theological understandings are not taken seriously," writes Jim Derstine, one of the council's directors.

Asked about the council's lengthy reply to the draft, Herta Funk, staff person for the human sexuality study committee, said, "This is the time for individuals and groups to respond to the statement, which at present is only a draft. The committee will accept all such responses and consider them in preparing the revision."

The statement on human sexuality will be presented during joint Mennonite Church/General Conference sessions in Bethlehem, Pa., on Aug. 4, but will be discussed later in separate denominational sessions. *Larry Cornies*

Twenty-one "Christian pacifists" have been expelled from East Germany to West Germany since the latter part of May, reported the London-based Reuter news agency on June 9. In addition, others who criticize military activities of both East and West Germany are reported by the agency to have been detained in the southern town of Jena.

Children with gaily painted faces carrying bright balloons; children enthusiastically watching a puppet show, singing or making masks; families together enjoying a bite to eat or watching a musical presentation—all were part of the Children's Festival '83 at the Christian Life Assembly building in Langley, B.C., March 26. Sponsored by the peace and service committee of Mennonite Central Committee (British Columbia), the festival carried the theme "Children's Festival—A Celebration of Peace."

Bethlehem '83 resolutions (1): tax withholding

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—Among the resolutions for consideration by delegates at the General Conference Mennonite Church Triennial Sessions, to be held Aug. 1-7 in Bethlehem, Pa., is a formal action authorizing conference officers to stop withholding taxes from the salaries of its employees as required by U.S. law. It also encourages Canadian Mennonites to obtain relief from the same requirement by Revenue Canada.

In 1979 at a special midtriennium conference in Minneapolis, GC delegates voted in favor of urging their General Board to "use all legal, legislative and administrative avenues for achieving a conscientious objector exemption from the legal requirement that the conference withhold income taxes from the wages of its employees." At Estes Park, Colo., in 1980, a judicial test case was okayed by a vote of 1,156 to 353.

Since 1980, however, all three "avenues" appear to have closed. A meeting with IRS officials in Washington in early 1982—the administrative avenue—failed to produce any results. The World Peace Tax Fund legislation pending in Congress—the legislative avenue—seems stalled a long way from gaining enough support to get serious attention. The preparation of a legal suit against the IRS, to be taken to the U.S. Supreme Court if necessary, was put on hold when it appeared, judging from other high court rulings, that the action would almost surely fail.

The conference's General Board, therefore, will bring the "Resolution on Faithful Action Toward Tax Withholding" to Bethlehem '83 delegates as their recommendation for resolving the moral dilemma which church officials feel they are facing. If approved, the resolution could take the conference into divine obedience/civil disobedience.

The following is the text of the resolution:

As Mennonite Christians we seek to be biblically obedient, submitting to such injunctions as Romans 13:7, "Pay taxes to whom taxes are due," but also Romans 13:8, 10, "Owe no one anything except to love one another . . . love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law." We accept our subordination to government and our obligation to pay taxes. However, we must witness to governments our conviction that war and preparation for war do wrong to our neighbors and are contrary to the will of God as revealed in the teachings of Jesus Christ and his death, resurrection and ascension to lordship.

Thus we urge our governments to sharply reduce military spending and use our resources for life-affirming purposes. Furthermore, just as conscientious objectors have received exemption from military service, we also seek legislation exempting conscientious objectors from paying taxes for military purposes. Thus we continue to work in the United States for passage for the World Peace Tax Fund Act and in Canada for the Peace Tax Fund, which would allow individuals to designate all of their federal taxes for peaceful purposes.

Both the U.S. Internal Revenue Service and Revenue Canada require the General Conference Mennonite Church to violate the consciences of its employees who are conscientious objectors to paying taxes for military purposes.

In the United States, we have thoroughly explored all legislative, administrative and judicial avenues for obtaining a conscientious objector exemption to these withholding requirements, as we resolved at the 1979 Minneapolis midtriennium conference. Our explorations have convinced us there is no likelihood of relief in the near future for conscientious objectors to military taxes. The time has come when, like Peter and the apostles, "We must obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29).

In Canada, equally thorough explorations of similar avenues for seeking a conscientious objection from withholding requirements have not yet been accomplished. We commend the "Resolution on Security and Disarmament" of the Canadian Mennonite Conference in 1982 and the work of the Canadian Tax Task Force under the sponsorship of MCC Canada Peace and Social Concerns. We encourage Canadian congregations to continue study of materials made available on the issue of military taxes.

As delegates to the 1983 triennial sessions of the General Conference Mennonite Church, we therefore:

1. Authorize the conference officers to test the constitutionality of the withholding requirements in the United States and to assert the higher claim of Christ's law of love by refusing to serve as tax collectors in cases where individual employees have asked that their federal income taxes not be withheld from their wages in order that they may conscientiously refuse to pay for war preparations. These employees will be treated similarly to the way General Conference treats ordained ministers, i.e. as self-employed persons, in that their earnings will be reported to the U.S. Internal Revenue Service, but no federal income tax withheld.
2. We request that the Conference of Mennonites in Canada consider means to obtain relief from Revenue Canada withholding requirements as these apply to General Conference Mennonite Church employees.
3. We shall inform the U.S. government of this act of conscientious objection to their withholding requirements. We shall again urge them to provide exemption from these requirements and exemption for people of peacemaking conscience from military use of their tax money.

At this moment of decision we commit ourselves to surround with our prayers the General Conference staff and government officials who will be involved in this action and all those individuals who refuse in conscience to pay taxes for war preparations, however costly their witness may be.

THE MENNONITE

WM Edition

window to mission

AUGUST-SEPTEMBER 1983

COME, AS LIVING STONES

the open window

LIVING STONES? It sounds like a contradiction. Certainly the stones in our yard are not alive!

But break open an ordinary geode, hollow stone, and inside you may find it is lined with exquisite agate or colored quartz. Some contain clear crystals. All have "grown" in common rock.

Somewhere in the rock was an opening which was filled with clay or sand. Water seeped into the opening and through the ages it dissolved certain minerals and salts forming pretty shapes and colors.

"Think of the crystalline wonder in precious and semi-precious stones," writes Eugenia Price in *Share My Pleasant Stones*, "in the so-called ordinary formations known as geodes or the fairyland of crystallization in underground caves where hanging stalactites and towering stalagmites 'grow' from commonplace ugly lumps of limestone!"

As we drink of the "living water," impurities are washed away and pleasant stones can grow, stones befitting the temple of the living God.

"O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted, behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colours, and lay thy foundations with sapphires. And I will make thy windows of agates, and thy gates of carbuncles, and all thy borders of pleasant stones." Isaiah 54:11, 12 KJV

"Come to him, to that living stone, rejected by men but in God's sight chosen and precious; and like living stones be yourselves built into a spiritual house . . ." 1 Peter 2:4, 5a RSV

—*LaVerna Klippenstein*

COVER

The cover sketch by Cheryl Rempel sets the focus for our 1983-84 Women in Mission program theme, "Come as Living Stones" based on 1 Peter 2:4, 5.

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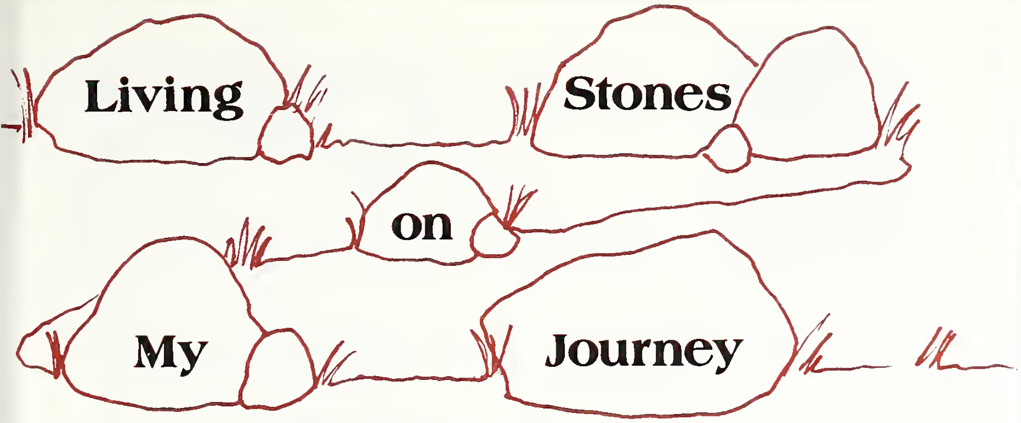


Living Stones on My Journey

As "living stones" we need one another to work together in building God's kingdom. Who in your life's journey has been a "living stone," one whom you have seen as a kingdom builder for God?

—Sharon Sommer

In 1974, under very unusual circumstances, I met Irene Weaver. Little did I know then that an enriching friendship would result because of that first meeting. Since that time I have had opportunity to sit at the kitchen table with Irene and hear of the many times she has sensed God's presence and leading in her life.

Irene grew up in India and later, with her husband, Ed, returned to do missionary work. They have also served in Africa, including two short-term assignments after retirement.

Irene has touched the lives of many women around the world in very special ways—teaching, listening, sharing griefs and joys, building the kingdom in very quiet and prayerful ways.

Life has not always been easy for her but I see the sacrifices she has made as stepping stones, and a molding process to produce the beautiful and gracious woman that she is. I feel very fortunate and humbled that I can call her my friend.

—Barbara Loges

My father was a "living stone" and example for my own life. He showed me that being a Christian means putting God and the church first in everything; that serving God is a joy and privilege, not a burden; and that every talent God has given me is to be used in his name and service.

Dad showed me how to have fun in the Lord. His sense of humor drew people to him, affording him the opportunity to speak for Christ.

Most of all, Dad set the example for faith in God and joy in the hereafter. As cancer consumed his body, he kept faith that God's will would be done. I will forever remember the joy upon his face as he gave himself up to Jesus at the end. He was ready. He had served well as a kingdom builder for God.

—Phyllis Wiebe

Agnes was quietly faithful, with a delightful sense of humor, but she never "stood out in a crowd." Recently we learned that she had terminal cancer. It was only a few days before her "home-going" that we went to visit her.

Her frail body showed little sign of life. My husband led in a brief prayer and we turned to leave, not sure that she was even aware of our presence. To our surprise, she opened her eyes and began to pray audibly. It must have taken all of her strength; she prayed at length, not for herself in this time of severe pain and suffering, but for others, especially for the young people in the church and community.

Here was a sixty-five-year-old Christian woman whose dying concern was for teenagers! Yes, I miss Agnes's presence in our congregation, and we also miss her prayers. Certainly she was a "living stone"—a gemstone!

—Gladys Simmons

My parents started me in the right direction, but many times when I came to a crossroad of temptation, God sent someone for special guidance. Ruby Cressman, teacher of our youth Sunday school class, was such a person.

Ruby was attractive, vivacious, and radiated God's love in a special way. One event that stands out in my memory was an overnight stay at a cabin where we had Bible study and plenty of girl talk. She really loved the Bible, and us—what an incredible revelation to impressionable teenagers. I decided I too wanted to be a geniune Christian, like Ruby.

She went on to be a minister's wife. As far as I can remember, every one of those girls in that Sunday school class is active in God's kingdom today. I think it is fitting that a "living stone" should be called Ruby—a real gem!

—Rachel Graber

Rosaline, my Puerto Rican friend, came to the Freeman community in her early twenties. She was a young Christian. She had a burning desire to learn the English language. Many times we laughed together as she searched for words in her new vocabulary. Before long she had mastered the language and was growing and maturing in her new faith.

With zest and enthusiasm she gave of herself to her lovely family, and to her church where she taught, sang, and served on committees. She actively supported Freeman Junior College through the Women's Auxiliary.

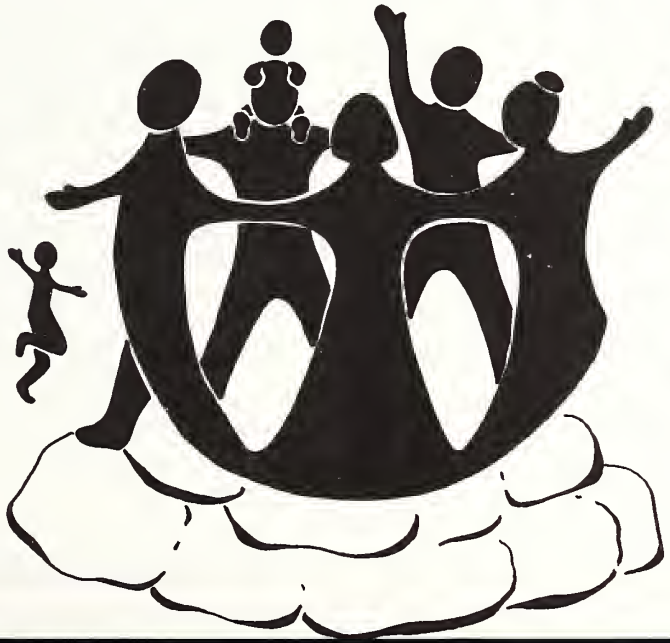
She repeatedly inspired me with her comments about the necessity of being loyal to the Mennonite church with financial support. She felt strongly that our General Conference materials and publications must be used to nurture our faith and principles.

In my life's journey, Rosie was a polished "living stone." How sad I felt when she became a victim of cancer several years ago and was "called home" to dwell in her spiritual house.

PROGRAM RESOURCES 1983-84

"Come as Living Stones" (Come to him, to that living stone, rejected by men but in God's sight chosen and precious; and like living stones be yourselves built into a spiritual house . . . 1 Peter 2:4, 5a RSV) is our 1983-84 Women in Mission program theme. The following program-lessons will appear in Window to Mission *during the coming year. Program committees should save these for their files. Below is a theme sketch you may want to use on your program booklet covers.*

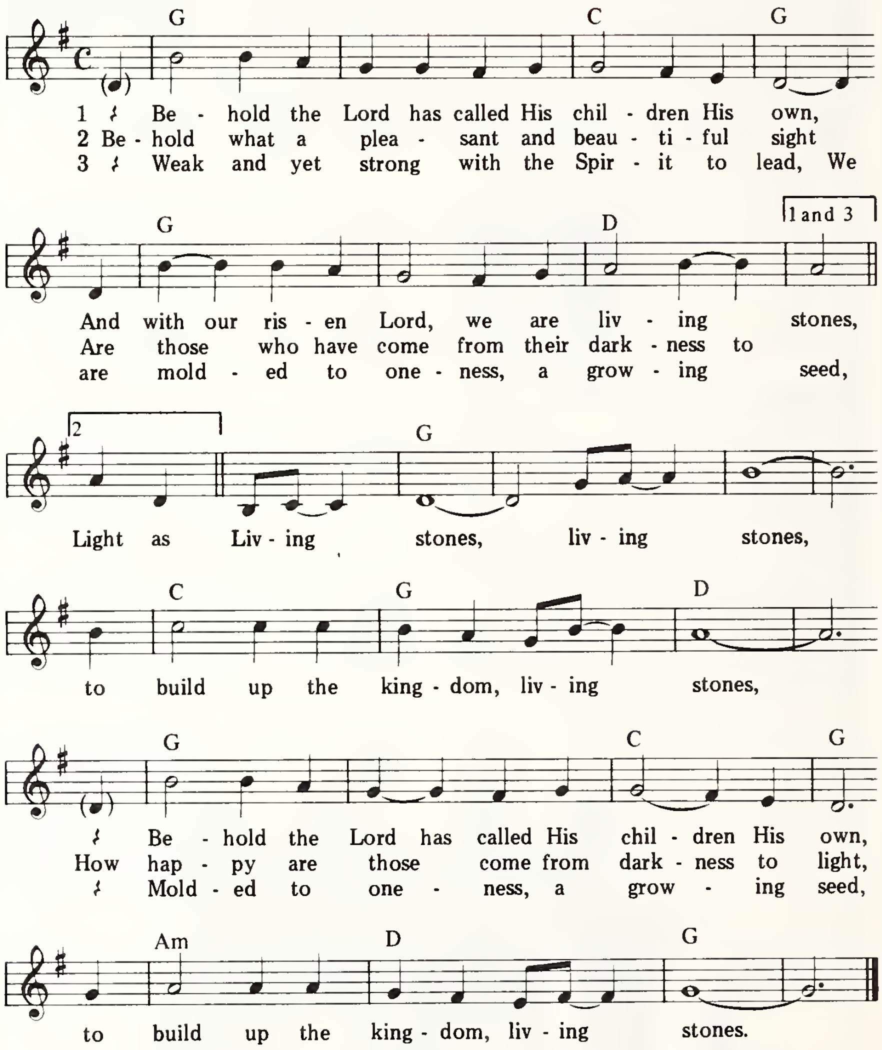
AUGUST-SEPTEMBER 1983
Program 1: "Living Stones Built Into a Spiritual House"—a look at how our Christian lives individually and together help build God's spiritual house.
OCTOBER-NOVEMBER 1983
Program 2: "Training for Mission"—will explore how our missionaries are trained at the Mission Training Center at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries.
DECEMBER 1983-JANUARY 1984
Program 3: "Parenting for Peace and Justice"—will focus on how we can make these important Mennonite beliefs meaningful to our children for now and the future.
FEBRUARY-MARCH 1984
Program 4: "I Heard Good News Today"—will focus on the new book by this title. Cornelia Lehn compiled and wrote this collection of mission stories for children and adults.
APRIL-MAY 1984
Program 5: "Our Umsiedler Sisters"—There are hundreds of our Mennonite sisters who have moved from Russia to West Germany. How are we helping these women who have suffered and are displaced? What stories do they tell?
JUNE-JULY 1984
Program 6: "We Are the Fragrance"—Our title, job, and economic or social status are not important in themselves in God's sight. Using 2 Corinthians 2:14 we will consider how God loves us and how we are God's fragrance.



Living Stones

Marilyn Houser Hamm

Marilyn Houser Hamm


G C G
1 Be - hold the Lord has called His chil - dren His own,
2 Be - hold what a plea - sant and beau - ti - ful sight
3 Weak and yet strong with the Spir - it to lead, We
G D 1 and 3
And with our ris - en Lord, we are liv - ing stones,
Are those who have come from their dark - ness to
are mold - ed to one - ness, a grow - ing seed,
2
Light as Liv - ing
G
stones, liv - ing stones,
C G D
to build up the king - dom, liv - ing stones,
G C G
Be - hold the Lord has called His chil - dren His own,
How hap - py are those come from dark - ness to light,
Mold - ed to one - ness, a grow - ing seed,
Am D G
to build up the king - dom, liv - ing stones.

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PROGRAM 1

living stones built into a spiritual house

Martha Smith Good

JANIE STRUGGLED endlessly. The blocks simply would not stand together. The least little jolt would send them all toppling to the floor. Discouragement reigned! What could she do?

Mother, upon noting her child's frustration asked, "What is the problem?" "It keeps falling over all the time," wailed Janie. "Here, let me show you something. These blocks all snap together. Then when your house is built even the wind cannot destroy it," assured the mother. No one had ever shown the child that her new Lego blocks were interlocking.

While we may not be Lego blocks, we as living stones are being built into a spiritual house, according to Peter. And, when we are built together solidly, nothing can destroy the spiritual house of which we are a part. We, like the small child, need to know what it takes to build such a house, and how we are to build it.

Peter's word picture is an interesting one. Living stone! Living stones! We may rightly ask, "How can a cold, hard, inanimate substance like a stone be living?" It can never produce or give life. Growth can only occur when there is warmth and movement. Peter had a profound purpose in mind when he coined the phrase *living stone*.

Peter wanted to talk about a very important spiritual principle. Thus he chose a term easily understood by his reading audience. Palestine was a stony country. More than that, stones served utilitarian functions.

They were formed into knives, used in balance scales, hung on plumblines, fashioned into ornate jewelry, and used as building blocks. The temple foundation was made of great hewn stones. City walls, pavements, and building columns were constructed from stone. Stones were a part of normal, daily living. To be built into a spiritual house was also to be a part of the normal spiritual lifestyle of the committed Christian.

Peter, in his reference to Christians (us) as "living stones," does so with the framework of Christ as the chief cornerstone. Jesus saw himself in this position. To the onlookers it appeared that he was rejected, but in God's purpose Jesus was the cornerstone of the new kingdom. It is because of Christ's strategic position in the kingdom structure that we as "living stones" can build on it.

Why? A cornerstone is laid as a foundation of a building. It is placed at an angle and serves to bind two walls together. In this position it gives form, shape, and stability to the structure. Christ, as the chief cornerstone, provides the support which is needed upon which to build the new kingdom.

Peter calls Christians "living stones" because they are being built into the spiritual temple of which Christ is the chief cornerstone. As we are built into the structure, we become as bricks in the edifice of the Christian church which is built by faith on Jesus Christ. As Christians we are likened to a living stone, and the church is the structure into which we are built.

What does it mean to be a "living stone"?

The definition of a "living stone" is a stone which is sound and not broken. It is whole and complete. To be a "living stone" then, is to be whole and complete.

Wholeness means different things to different people. Wholeness, as I understand it, is to recognize the need to integrate our strengths and weaknesses. Wholeness happens as we allow our need to be met in God, through Jesus Christ, and in our relationships with other persons. We are whole because we are God's creation, and therefore created to be in relationship with our Creator, and each other.

Peter gives some very specific instructions as to how wholeness can come about. He begins by inviting us to come to Christ, and to offer ourselves to him to be used in building his kingdom.

To be built into the spiritual house we are to take the initiative and make the choice to come to Christ and offer ourselves. Peter is issuing an invitation, implying that there is a welcome awaiting us if we seek to respond. This must be the first step in becoming whole, or in becoming "living stones." It is at this juncture where the transition from simply being a stone transforms us into "living stones." The step in commitment instills new life and we become spiritually alive.

Kingdom of God's community

Peter moves on then to say that once the stone has come to life it has the privilege of being built into the spiritual house. There is entrance into the kingdom of God's new community. A house cannot be built with only one stone. Even the chief cornerstone in a building does not make a house in and of itself. A brick or a stone in isolation is functionless.

As "living stones" we are called to be in community. Stones must be willing to touch other stones if a building is to happen. To work together in building the kingdom means that there is common effort and unity in the effort.

Individual Christianity is not Christianity! Christianity is *community* within the fellowship of the church. When we are placed beside each other, when we allow our lives to touch each other, when we open ourselves to share in each other's joys and sorrows, then we become a spiritual house. And only then does the church become visible and God's kingdom begin to come.

Peter says that first we are to come to Christ, and then we are to come to each other. To be cemented together in faith is to build a very special building.

Peter says that first we are to come to Christ, and then we are to come to each other. To be cemented together in faith is to build a very special building.

While an empty building may appear aesthetically attractive, we all know that it is probably not very functional if it stands empty. The spiritual house of which Peter speaks is task oriented. We are to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

Spiritual sacrifices are the manifestations of our commitment to Christ and his kingdom. They are the gifts we offer in our roles of being priests to each other. The Latin word for priest means a bridge builder. As members of the holy priesthood of which Peter speaks we become bridges for others to become a part of this same spiritual house. We open the way for others to also become living stones.

A favorite story which I love to retell is the one of Michelangelo, the great European artist. It is said that Michelangelo was one day pushing a huge rock down the street. A curious onlooker, sitting lazily on a porch, called out to him, inquiring why he would labor so hard over an old piece of stone. It is reported that Michelangelo replied, "Because there is an angel in that rock that wants to come out."

To the great artist, this rock was a "living stone." Deep within that rock was something very beautiful, and he intended to transform an ugly rock into a delicate art piece.

Many of us will never be a Michelangelo in terms of presenting the world with great artistic works, but all of us can be artists in the lives of others. We can offer our spiritual sacrifices so that others may also be built into the spiritual house of which we are a part.

Spiritual sacrifices

Peter does not elaborate on the kinds of spiritual sacrifices he may have had in mind. I would like to list a few of the sacrifices which I believe to be important in this spiritual house.

First, there is the sacrifice or gift of *love*—the kind of love which moves out beyond ourselves and touches the lonely and the unlovable. We are to give love which takes no thought of what will be received in return. Every spiritual house needs love as a "living stone." Without love the kingdom cannot be built.

Second is the "living stone" of *gentleness* and *kindness*, As "living stones" in community, our actions toward each other dare never be harsh or cruel, but are rather to exhibit the gentle and kind spirit which was so much a part of Jesus.

Third, if our spiritual house is to appear inviting, then there must be in it many stones of *compassion*. Compassion is both an attitude and an action which manifests itself as it reaches out in sensitive, caring ways.

When we respond to others with compassion, their stone becomes more alive and beautiful to behold. Living stones of compassion add an additional dimension to the house without which it would be incomplete.

Uniqueness and individuality blossom most beautifully when they stand in contrast, or complement each other in relationship.

Fourth, if a building is to remain intact, then *faithfulness* is a must. If one stone should decide to remove itself, the entire structure could crumble. Once we have made a commitment to become a part of the spiritual house, we have a responsibility to remain a part of that structure. We are called to be faithful and to serve in our capacity in order to maintain a unified whole. It is not permissible to cop out. We are there to be supportive to each other and to remain united with the chief cornerstone, Christ.

Faithfulness means that we carry through with our specific task within the spiritual house, or in other words, the kingdom of God.

In 1 Peter 2:9 Peter affirms that we are people chosen by God. He is declaring that we have been called. Like Michelangelo and the stone, we too have been hewn out of the rock to become "living stones." We have been chosen, we have been cemented into the spiritual framework of which Christ is the chief cornerstone.

To be called by God is both a privilege and a responsibility. It is a privilege because of the honor bestowed on us as one of God's children. It is a responsibility because it is task oriented. Anything needing to be made—a cake to be baked, a house to be constructed, a dress to be sewn—will not happen by itself. It takes hands willing to work at the process.

How then can we serve?

God's spiritual house will never be built by itself. It demands our "response-ability." We are chosen to serve. How can we as women serve God in the process of building the spiritual house of which Peter speaks?

There are as many answers as there are persons, for each of us has been given a unique gift or gifts. For some it may mean sharing over coffee with a neighbor; others may choose employment in social service agencies; some may move into pulpit ministries; many will choose to raise a family; others will devote themselves to prayer and meditation.

If we were to examine closely each brick in a building, it would be apparent that no two are alike. So too is the nature of the spiritual house. Uniqueness and individuality blossom most beautifully when they stand in contrast, or complement each other in relationship.

Janie needed to be shown how to build her house of Lego blocks. Sometimes we can prompt each other as we seek to discover how we can most effectively serve in building the spiritual house. Times of personal sharing and reflection are life building and faith sustaining, and need to be a part of our life together as "living stones."

It is exciting to be a part of a spiritual construction crew! As we labor side by side in building, may we use cement mixed with love, and stones fashioned by our Creator in whom we have life, hope, and faith.

PROGRAM "HOW-TO" IDEAS

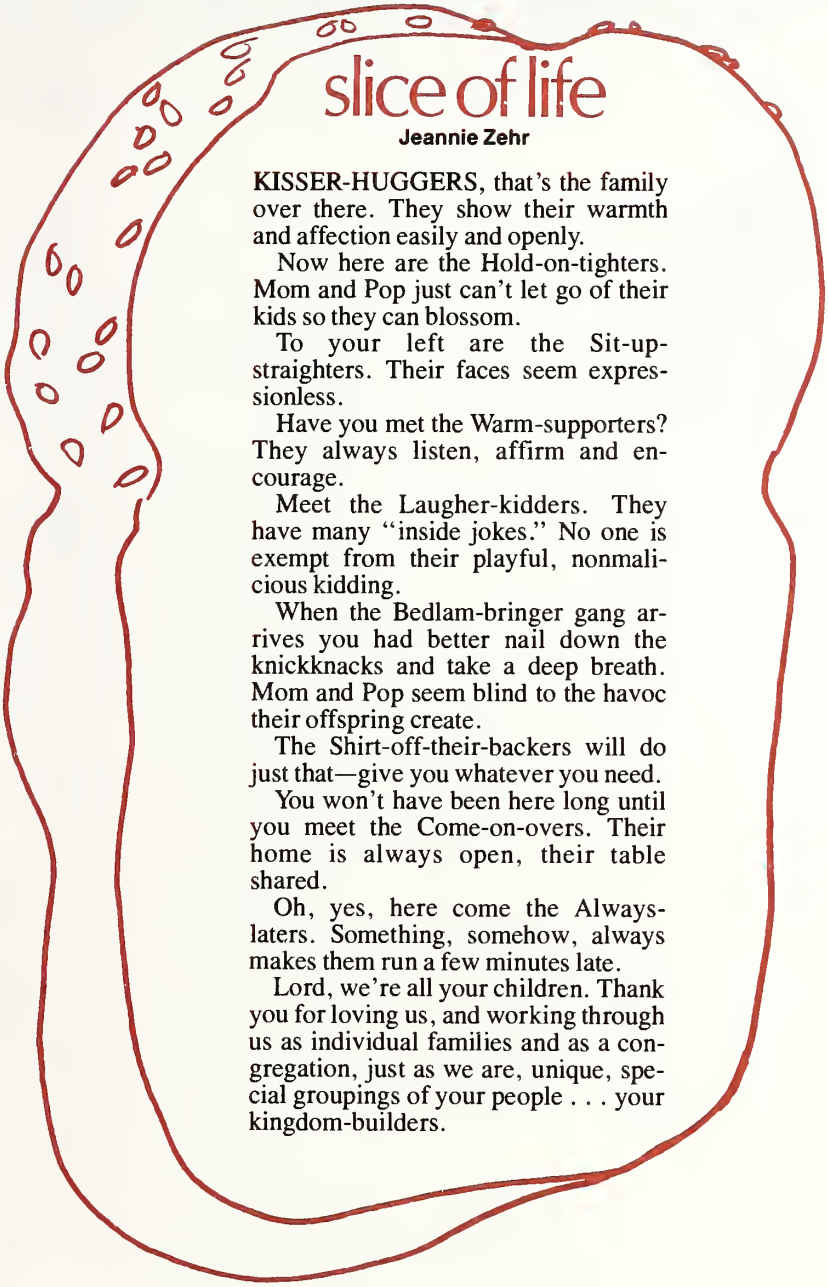
1. For your devotional, use the material suggested for Program 1 in the 1983-84 Devotional/Resource Packet available from the WM Office, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114 for $2.
2. Read 1 Peter 2:4-10 and Isaiah 28:16. What was the historical situation at the time Isaiah wrote these words? Of what advantage is it that Peter, in his context, quotes Isaiah?

If you have access to Bible commentaries use them to facilitate your understanding of the texts.

3. Break into small groups to discuss "living stones" you have experienced in your lives. Use the first article in this magazine, "Living Stones on My Journey" as a model of how to make this sharing more personal.
4. Discuss the importance of an individual Christian experience. Do you agree that we dare not live our Christian lives in isolation?
5. Break into groups of three or four persons and give each group an ample supply of Lego blocks. First, have each person attempt to build her own house. Second, have each group build a house together without speaking to one another. Third, have the groups each build a house while discussing how to do it.

Discuss which method was most effective and what individuals learned about themselves through the exercise.

6. Invite a Christian contractor to discuss important factors to be considered when building. Can some of these same factors be applied to "spiritual house building"? If so, how?



slice of life

Jeannie Zehr

KISSER-HUGGERS, that's the family over there. They show their warmth and affection easily and openly.

Now here are the Hold-on-tighters. Mom and Pop just can't let go of their kids so they can blossom.

To your left are the Sit-up-straighters. Their faces seem expressionless.

Have you met the Warm-supporters? They always listen, affirm and encourage.

Meet the Laugher-kidders. They have many "inside jokes." No one is exempt from their playful, nonmalicious kidding.

When the Bedlam-bringer gang arrives you had better nail down the knickknacks and take a deep breath. Mom and Pop seem blind to the havoc their offspring create.

The Shirt-off-their-backers will do just that—give you whatever you need.

You won't have been here long until you meet the Come-on-overs. Their home is always open, their table shared.

Oh, yes, here come the Always-laters. Something, somehow, always makes them run a few minutes late.

Lord, we're all your children. Thank you for loving us, and working through us as individual families and as a congregation, just as we are, unique, special groupings of your people . . . your kingdom-builders.

THE co CONNECTION

Leona Schrag

Leona has been on North America assignment for a year and will return to Zaire in August. She serves in the area of Christian education, literature work, and language teaching.

"DO YOU SEE that hill across the valley?" asked my host. "That is where we got the stones for building our church. The church members carried all of the stones across that valley to our building site here."

Stones were carried on the heads and shoulders of the church members to build their church.

So it is with the spiritual church of God. Individuals "like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house" (1 Pet. 2:5 NIV). These living stones which are building God's spiritual house come from every part of the world.

Many of these precious stones come from Africa, from Zaire. Living stones vary in age, in interests, in experiences, blending together to form one beautiful spiritual house.

A Zairian pastor received a call from the church administration to move to a new parish. When he evaluated his situation, he wanted to remain where he was. The move would involve hardship and personal loss.

However, accepting the call as from God, he responded affirmatively saying, "I consider my life worth nothing to me, if only I may finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me—the task of testifying to the gospel of God's grace" (Acts 20:24 NIV).

Another "living stone" in God's spiritual house is a young mother whose husband was away for training to become an army chaplain. The responsibility of supporting and training her children all alone could have been a full-time job.

Her gifts and training prompted church leaders to choose her to direct the women's seminars.

She planted her millet field, as did her neighbors. When drought came, her millet survived while millet in the fields around withered away. She explained the events by saying that God had known her need, answered her prayers, and provided her with millet. She gave God the praise while sharing millet plants with others to replant.

Young "living stones" add luster to the building. Their testimonies at the close of a youth camp were evidence of their vitality.

"This camp was defined to be an encounter with the Savior . . . it's certain that I encountered the Savior in this camp. I am sure of my salvation. I had total confusion in my life, but at this moment, I am certain that I will appear with God in the heavenly kingdom."

A young girl appreciated the sessions on how to lead a Bible study. Being the oldest child in her family, she had the responsibility to lead family devotions. She returned home with new confidence for her task.

Building God's kingdom requires builders who are willing to sweat and labor to seek out stones for God's spiritual house, builders from around the world.

CONSIDER READING

MANY WOMEN may not think of themselves as leaders in the church, but the approach that Paul M. Miller takes in his book, *Leading the Family of God* (Herald Press, 1981) calls each of us, male and female, to responsible participation in congregational life. Miller's vision of the church as an extended family is given support by Jesus' teachings as well as by other New Testament writers. He notes that Paul used one's success at leading a human family as one of the prerequisites for leadership in the church (1 Timothy 3:1-5).

The author's caution against creating a patriarchal pattern in which male leaders dominate is well taken. Mutual subordination and the servanthood model of leadership is emphasized instead.

The book contains practical ways in which congregations can build on the family model versus the corporation or social organizational model. Examples include a refreshing discussion on the weaknesses of using only parliamentary procedure in decision making, and only elections in choosing leaders. Details on gift discernment methods and making team leadership mutually accountable are also helpful.

Generation to Generation (Pilgrim Press, 1974) by John H. Westerhoff III and Gwen Kennedy Neville and *Will Our Children Have Faith?* (Seabury Press, 1976) by John H. Westerhoff III are two books which can help us rethink the sharing of our Christian faith with our children. The second book presents Westerhoff's plan for religious education based on ideas expressed in conversational essays between himself and anthropologist Neville in the first book. The combination of these two disciplines is appropriate because Westerhoff suggests that our present school model of Christian education be replaced with a community-of-faith enculturation model in which interaction between generations would be the primary teaching method (echoes of Deuteronomy 6:4-9!).

In *Generation to Generation* he refers to the Amish as "a community which uses its total life and action as an educational instrument" and recommends those principles to us.

Will Our Children Have Faith? reminds us that the Christian education of our children really begins with Christian renewal in the lives of adults in the church. Westerhoff says, "The teacher may teach about Christianity, but if he is to communicate Christ he must live in fellowship with him."

He points out much that we already know about the importance of teaching by example, but presents it with new clarity and urgency.

Readers can gain an understanding of Westerhoff's proposal by reading only *Will Our Children Have Faith?*, but chapters 2 and 9 in *Generation to Generation* are especially stimulating.

All three books are written in a popular and conversational style and can help us to set our sights higher as we serve Christ in the home and the church. —*Alice Suderman*

WM office jottings from Joan

MEET SOPHIA CHANG

The following article is based on an interview by Angela Rempel. Angela and her husband Erwin visited General Conference mission areas in Asia last April. While in Taipei, Taiwan, Angela visited with Sophia Chang, who will be coming to Mennonite Biblical Seminary with her husband this fall. WM is assisting Sophia with travel funds through the Women's World Outreach fund. We hope that many of our WM groups will have the opportunity of meeting Sophia while they are attending seminary.

Sophia and her husband Joshua are coming to study and learn at AMBS, but most of us could learn a great deal from them. You need to meet Sophia to appreciate her joy in serving the Lord.

Sophia was born into a Buddhist family and remembers going to the temple with her grandmother. Her first contact with Christianity was during her first year of college. She did not accept Christianity at first as that would be disobeying her family. When she did accept Christ in her second college year, her circumstances did not change but her heart did. She felt joy and God's love.

When she was baptized a year later, she felt God calling her to devote herself to him. She resisted but had no peace until she yielded. Her family thought there was no future in living the Christian way. When she graduated, they said no more about her faith, but stopped financial support when she went to China Evangelical Seminary in Taipei, Taiwan.

No one contributed regularly to her support while she was at seminary for three years, but God provided funds when needed. Once she had no money for food and she prayed for help to endure the hunger and promised to serve the Lord even if her physical needs were not supplied.

Joshua was a seminary classmate and they were married after graduation. Their daughters Grace and Irene are four and nearly three respectively. The Changs served the Sung Chiang Mennonite Church in Taipei which has grown from forty to seventy members.

Sophia feels that God has called her to be a full-time pastor's wife and mother. Her role in the church is to help others work together rather than doing it all herself, even though she has seminary training. She is glad to do menial tasks in the church and home as that is also serving God.

There are several observations about being a pastor's wife that she would like to share. First, God helps her do what he calls her to do. Keeping in touch with all the members and their needs is hard, but she has joy in doing this.

Second, she learned that God cares and provides. When Joshua's motorcycle was stolen, unsolicited money was given until they had enough to buy another used one.

Third, she has felt the love of the church people. Older Christians counsel and guide them, and help with her children.

Finally, she has found that God is her rock, helper, and strength. When tests revealed a tumor in her esophagus she was quite upset. But she yielded this to him and was comforted by the promise of a long life in Psalm 91. She feels God healed her in order that she might help others.

Sophia's special interest is counseling. Little is available in Chinese on this subject, and her dream is to someday translate materials.

response

"Because of the ice storm in Winnipeg I spent twelve hours (one night) in the Minneapolis airport on my way home from Newton. During the first part of the night a young mother, her son, and the grandmother shared the chairs in the ladies' room with me. They had not had stable marriages and had known only single-parent homes. They asked where I had been and why, so I showed them some copies of *Window to Mission*. They were very interested in them and when the young mother started reading a devotional, her mother put on her glasses, but still couldn't read. She asked her daughter to read aloud. So there she was reading your "Slice of Life" to her mother and others who wandered in and out of the restroom! I wish I had given them several copies."

LaVerna Klippenstein,
Winnipeg, Manitoba

contributors

Cheryl Rempel (cover and p. 5 artwork) is a member of the Mennonite Church of Normal, Illinois. She is a registered nurse and currently a full-time student at Elmhurst College, Elmhurst, Illinois.

LaVerna Klippenstein (The Open Window) is a member of the Women in Mission Literature Committee. She and her husband, Larry, and family make their home in Winnipeg, Manitoba. LaVerna serves on the Mennonite Biblical Seminary board.

Sharon Sommer (Living Stones on My Journey) and her husband, John, and two children live in Newton, Kansas. Sharon is president of the Western District WM, is adult Sunday school supervisor at Faith Church, and teaches piano lessons.

Barbara Loges (Living Stones on My Journey) is a farm wife and mother of five children. She lives at Farmington, Iowa, and teaches Sunday school, directs the junior choir, does substitute teaching and serves as Projects Advisor for the Central District WM.

Phyllis Wiebe (Living Stones on My Journey) is a pastor's wife and mother of three children. She works as an administrative secretary in Winnipeg, Manitoba. She serves as the president of the Manitoba WM.

Rachel Graber (Living Stones on My Journey) and her husband live on a dairy farm in the Freeman, South Dakota, area. They have two sons. Rachel is active in the Salem Church WM, is president of the Northern District WM, and serves on the board of Freeman Junior College.

Gladys Simmons (Living Stones on My Journey) grew up in Kitchener, Ontario, but since 1950 has lived with her husband and children in Bally, Pennsylvania. She has three grandchildren and has been a secretary for nineteen years. She is actively involved in the Hereford Mennonite Church.

Martha Smith Good (Program 1: Living Stones Built Into a Spiritual House) is half-time pastor of the Guelph Mennonite Church, Guelph, Ontario. Her husband is also a pastor. She is a graduate of Goshen Biblical Seminary and has had Clinical Pastoral Education training. She has a special interest in "intensive journaling."

Angela Rempel (WM Office Jottings) and her husband, Erwin, served as missionaries in Brazil for seven years. They moved to Newton, Kansas, in September of 1982 when Erwin became executive secretary of the General Conference Commission on Overseas Mission. The Rempels have three children aged twelve, eight, and three.

Alice Suderman (Consider Reading) has an active interest in literature and Christian education. Alice is chairperson of the Commission on Education of the General Conference, and serves on the local public library board. She and her husband, John, live in Mountain Lake, Minnesota.

credits

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SONG: P. 6, Reprinted with permission from the author-composer, Marilyn Houser Hamm, and the publisher of *Sing and Rejoice*, copyright 1979 by Herald Press, Scottdale, PA 15683.

Martha Smith Good

Angela Rempel

Alice Suderman

forecast

The October-November issue of *Window to Mission* will highlight the Mission Training Center located on the campus of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries in Elkhart, Indiana. We will also look at the co-op nursery on the campus and take a look at some mission work overseas.

Printed in U.S.A.

bright ideas

IN 1984 Women in Mission hopes to publish a new booklet in the "Bright Ideas . . ." series. This time we will focus on ideas for special events such as mother-daughter gatherings, holiday programs and socials, mission emphasis meetings, evenings when spouses are invited, and so on.

To make this booklet worth sharing, we need your ideas. What have you done in your groups? It may not seem extra spectacular to you, but it was enjoyable or helpful, and some other groups may never have heard or thought of the idea.

Please share something about your activity and mail it to Jeannie Zehr, 4226 Maplecrest Road, Fort Wayne, IN 46815. Do it right away as plans are now being formulated for the booklet and writing will start in the next few months. Don't assume that your idea isn't worth sharing.

Speaking of "Bright Ideas . . ." booklets, has your group ordered the latest booklet "Bright Ideas for Workers with Youth and Younger"? Also available is the first booklet, "Bright Ideas for Program Planning." All are available from the WM Office, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114 for $3 each.

Women of the First Mennonite Church, Chicago, Illinois, distributed 144 toys at Christmastime last year to children of unemployed parents and children of their congregation.

The unemployed families in their area were invited to the Sunday school Christmas program. Toys were distributed after the program.

Members of the Good Shepherd Church, Sioux Falls, South Dakota, want their children to be a real part of the congregation. One way they work at this is through their quarterly offerings where everyone is encouraged to give something other than money.

The offerings are brought forward during the worship service. On the Sunday prior to the special offering one of the children shares about the coming offering.

Some of their projects have been a ship made out of a box loaded with bars of soap, and a wheelbarrow of spools of thread.

WM groups in Oregon state are many miles apart. In order to keep touch with one another and one another's activities, the groups have a "round robin" letter circulating among them.

Three more churches have applied for membership in the General Conference, bringing the number of congregations to be admitted to the denomination at its triennial sessions, Aug. 1-7, to 26. Cedar Falls (Iowa) Mennonite Fellowship, Covenant Mennonite Church, Saskatoon, and Lafayette (Ind.) Mennonite Fellowship are the latest churches to request conference membership. That will bring the total number of constituent congregations, after Bethlehem '83, to 352.

Pinto beans totaling 87,000 pounds were loaded in Nampa, Idaho, for shipment to El Salvador on May 5. The beans, which have an approximate value of $8,000, were donated by 12 different growers. Members of six Idaho Mennonite churches will raise $8 per 100-pound bag to pay for the storage and partial transportation of the beans to El Salvador.

Bethlehem '83 resolutions (2): inter-Mennonite cooperation

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—Bethlehem '83, to be held on the campus of Lehigh University, Bethlehem, Pa., Aug. 1-7, will represent the first time that the two largest Mennonite groups in North America—the Mennonite Church and the General Conference Mennonite Church—are holding their denomination-wide meetings conjointly.

The future of inter-Mennonite relationships will be a primary concern of many Bethlehem '83 delegates. To pioneer discussion and suggest some action on that issue, the General Boards of both denominations have prepared a "Statement on Inter-Mennonite Cooperation in North America," to which conference participants will be invited to respond.

The following is a partial text of the statement:

In these days we pause to recognize and give thanks for the ways in which God's Spirit is bringing Mennonites together. We experience this in inter-Mennonite organizations such as Mennonite World Conference, Mennonite Central Committee, Mennonite Disaster Service, Mennonite Mental Health Services and more.

We experience this in inter-Mennonite programs such as Mennonite Mutual Aid, publishing *The Foundation Series* and the *Mennonite Experience in America*, leadership training at the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, missions (Council of International Ministries and the Council of Home Ministries), Inter-Mennonite Conference in Ontario, inter-Mennonite structures in urban areas and more.

We experience this in 46 congregations holding dual-conference memberships, in linking of families through marriage, in the sharing across conference lines of pastoral leadership and more.

We experience this in meetings where Mennonites come together, such as the joint sessions of the Illinois Conference and Central District Conference, the South Central Conference and the Western District Conference, the Pacific Coast Conference and the Pacific District Conference, the Southwest Conference and the Pacific District Conference, the Mennonite Conference of Ontario and Quebec, Western Ontario Conference and the United Mennonite Churches in Ontario and more.

We acknowledge:

1. That we have a common faith in the one true God, Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord, and the Holy Spirit.
2. That we are part of one spiritual ancestry, many of whose forebears came to this continent in search of freedom and worship and with the desire to live a life of peace in obedience to Jesus Christ.
3. That we have been separated by our cultural backgrounds and have gone our own ways and have allowed commitments to our respective structures to keep us apart from one another.
4. That in recent years the Spirit of God has been bringing us together in fellowship and common tasks, in many ways and places, with some problems but many joys. Particularly have we experienced this as the church has reached out in ministries of mission and compassion.

We commit ourselves:

1. To be open to the leading of the Spirit in unfolding ways of loving one another, receiving from one another, supporting one another in a united witness so that we can better testify to other Christians and to the world that we are together disciples of Jesus.
2. To support congregations which have affiliated with more than one denomination to resolve in mutually satisfying ways their denominational relationships.
3. To encourage area conferences to seek additional ways of working together cooperatively, seeking wholeness in ministry, including the ministries of evangelism, service, peace, justice, nurture and to affirm exploration of forming area inter-Mennonite conferences.
4. To work intentionally and sensitively in programs and on issues of common concern to the conferences.
5. To relate to each other in ways which will strengthen fellowship and participation among all Mennonite groups.
6. To form an inter-Mennonite committee representing Mennonite and Brethren in Christ denominations to explore steps of cooperation at the binational level.
7. To support similar types of Mennonite meetings as has occurred here at Bethlehem '83.

We move forward with gratitude for the unity in the Spirit we have experienced and in expectation of an unfolding of God's leading as we seek to walk together in his ways.

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Altona, MB R0G 0B0
Phone 204/324-8631.

Leading minister needed

Lowe Farm (Man.) Bergthaler Mennonite Church, membership of 140, is looking for a leading minister. The church is located in a predominantly Mennonite farming community.

Direct inquiries to:
Randy Schroeder
Box 55
Lowe Farm, MB R0G 1E0.

The stampede grounds at Morris, Man., will be the scene of this fall's annual Manitoba Mennonite Central Committee Auction Sale. The all-day event will be held Sept. 24, and hundreds of volunteers are busy planning for it. Last year's sale raised over $65,000 for Third World Relief and development projects administered by MCC.

The September 1982 Morris sale

A federal judge has barred the U.S. Forest Service from building a logging road through an area in northern California held sacred by several Indian tribes. The ruling by District Judge Stanley A. Weigel was the first to protect a sacred Indian site, said Marilyn B. Miles, a lawyer for California Indian Legal Services who represented members of the Yorok, Karok and Tolowa tribes in the suit. Members of the tribes travel at different times to the Six Rivers National Forest just below the Oregon border for spiritual experiences.

Youth workers convene for inter-Mennonite training event

Akron, Pa.—District, provincial and conference youth leadership of the Mennonite Church and the General Conference met together for the first time May 17-20 for Youth Council training sessions.

Hosted at the headquarters of Mennonite Central Committee here, the inter-Mennonite group learned from one another, received in-service training from two guest speakers, heard reports from a number of churchwide agency and education personnel and became better acquainted with MCC offices and programs.

Much of the time was spent in joint sessions chaired by Mark Miller, youth minister for the western half of Central District Conference (GC) and Illinois Conference (MC). Several meetings were held separately, chaired by Paula Diller Lehman, director of youth education for the Commission on Education, Newton, Kan., and Lavon Welty, associate secretary for congregational youth ministries with Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries, Elkhart, Ind. The denominational youth offices were instrumental in planning and facilitating the event.

General Conference youth workers in attendance were Curt Bechler, Cassopolis, Mich., Abe Bergen, Winnipeg, David and Anne Braun, Lethbridge, Alta., Linda W. Dueck, Waterloo, Ont., Jenny Harms Martens, Newton, Kan., Mark Miller, Chenoa, Ill., and Anna Rehan, Richmond, B.C. Eleven Mennonite Church youth workers took part in the four-day meeting.

One of the purposes of Youth Council is to enhance the cross-fertilization of ideas and resources among youth workers. In Akron this happened informally and during joint sessions when participants presented a "success story" along with a "disaster" from their previous year's youth work.

Don Kraybill, Elizabethtown, Pa., spoke on "Biblical Hope in a Nuclear Age" in two sessions Wednesday. Emphasizing the effects of nuclear proliferation on youth, Kraybill dealt with "Demise of Hope: Roots of Despair," "The Scandal of Biblical Hope" and "Escape from Despair: Varieties of Hope."

On Thursday, Don Richter, Louisville, Ky., led three sessions on "Dimensions of Youth Ministry." He highlighted lifestyle issues, faith/values, relational factors and expressive needs, then sketched 14 misconceptions—seven about young people and seven about what it means to be an effective youth worker.

During the week, times of interchange also took place with people representing student and young adult concerns, *With* magazine, voluntary service (MC), higher education, church colleges, the film *The Weight* and the non-registration position. In addition, substantial time was spent on matters related to the North American Mennonite Youth Gathering to be held Aug. 1-7 in Bethlehem, Pa.

Youth Council participants did find time for a tour of the Lancaster (Pa.) area, soccer and volleyball and the annual pizza bash.

The group decided to meet jointly again next year at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Ind., May 9-12. *Dan Shenk*

Canadian evangelical leaders discuss strategy, training

Toronto (EFC)—Four hundred evangelical leaders gathered in Toronto June 6-9 for the Canadian Consultation on Evangelism. Ministers and lay leaders from mainline Protestant churches and newer denominations came from nine provinces for stock-taking, strategy discussion and practical training. The consultation was sponsored by the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada.

Daytime sessions and workshops were held at Ontario Bible College and Theological Seminary, and public meetings were held each evening in The People's Church.

Consultation chairman Victor Adrian and Canadian-born evangelist Leighton Ford both stressed on the opening night that the primary challenge facing Canadian churches in the coming decade was the evangelization of the growing number of unchurched people in the secularized society around them.

Consultation participants packed workshops which dealt specifically with evangelization of significant segments of that unchurched group—inner-city residents, students, prisoners, youth, native people, ethnic minorities and adherents of other religions.

Canadian evangelists Barry Moore, Marney Patterson, Terry Winter and Meryle Dolan led workshops related to conventional crusade evangelism. In addition, television preachers Paul Smith, David Mainse and H. H. Barber dealt with the electronic ministry.

Other workshops considered church growth, visitation evangelism, congregational renewal and the relationship between evangelism and social responsibility.

Large congregations attended the consultation's four evening rallies. Speakers at those public meetings included Leighton Ford and Luis Palau, Argentinian-born evangelist who heads the Luis Palau Evangelistic Teams.

Television is "a sort of fantasy version of what's happening. You cannot through pictures—through looking at your TV screen—come to grips with real life, because what you see is not life; it's a fantasy—only a picture." This statement by Malcolm Muggeridge, well-known British commentator and philosopher, appears in an interview in the June issue of *Listen* magazine. "A great danger," Muggeridge adds, "is that people believe the picture more than the written or spoken word." He points out that pictures can be distorted more than people realize. And children's sense of what the world is about comes almost exclusively from television.

The MCC (Alberta) peace and social concerns committee sponsored a workshop designed to train people in the skills of mediating interpersonal disputes within the church. The workshop, which was held May 13-15 at Camp Evergreen, had 30 participants. Ron Kraybill, director of Mennonite Conciliation Service, MCC U.S., served as the resource person. The main tool used to equip the participants with mediation skills was role playing. Two follow-up sessions were planned for June.

Income from Dec. 1, 1982, to May 31 was 7 percent behind the approved budget for that period for Mennonite Central Committee (Canada). Treasurer Paul Peters suggested several avenues of response. Expenditures for the last six months of the 1983 fiscal year may need to be cut by 6-7 percent, he said. On the other hand, the message to Mennonite and Brethren in Christ people needs to be a challenge to give sacrificially, he said.

Colombian Mennonites assist in Popayán reconstruction

Popayán, Colombia (MCC)—Five teams of Colombian Mennonites spent approximately two weeks each in the colonial city of Popayán rebuilding houses damaged in the March 31 earthquake.

Mennonite Central Committee worker Nelson Weber from Fleetwood, Pa., visited Popayán, located 70 miles south of Cali, during the rebuilding project and reported, "The group was able to clean up an average of about two houses each day. The work usually consisted of demolishing damaged walls, cleaning and stacking undamaged brick, and carting all the trash out to the street."

MENCOLDES, the service arm of the General Conference and Mennonite Brethren churches in Colombia, has overseen the project and recruited workers for the teams. MCC has provided $10,000 to MENCOLDES to cover volunteers' expenses, some building supplies and medicines.

Luis Correa, executive director of MENCOLDES, reported that volunteers have responded positively to their assignments. They have returned to their local churches with a new vision for serving the needy after their experience in Popayán.

The project has also provided an opportunity for General Conference and Mennonite Brethren to work side-by-side in a relief project.

Despite positive responses to the project, MENCOLDES decided not to undertake a major reconstruction project due to lack of qualified people to administer the project. There is also political instability in the area.

Local Mennonite Brethren seminary students in Cali, however, are now active in constructing prefabricated temporary shelters in cooperation with World Vision.

Earthen dam under construction to improve farm acreage

Kalyanpur, India (MCC)—People living here in drought-stricken Madhya Pradesh have begun building a dam that will enable them to store irrigation water.

When the earthen dam is completed, residents of six villages will be able to grow additional crops on 200 more acres of irrigated land. Mennonite Central Committee and CHERRDA, a Mennonite development agency with offices 18 miles from here in Ambikapur, are helping with the project.

The Kalyanpur dam will be 990 feet long, 60 feet wide at the base and 18 feet high. All of the earth will be moved using the traditional wide-bladed hoe and baskets. Al Doerksen, MCC country representative in India, estimates that it will take four to six months to complete the construction. Local residents oversee the project.

MCC has provided 200 metric tons of wheat that the 300 to 400 workers are receiving as wages and Rs. 30,000 ($2,597 U.S.) that will cover transportation costs and other expenses. The wheat is part of the 9,000-ton wheat shipment that MCC sent to India in March.

The dam project began April 7 with a groundbreaking ceremony. MCC worker Ben Sawatzky of Henderson, Neb., spoke at the ceremony as well as Abdul Rashid Sidique, a lawyer from Ambikapur. P. K. Ram, a Mennonite pastor, and Nawal Banwar, secretary-treasurer for CHERRDA, were also present at the ceremony.

Villages in this area suffered from drought in late 1982. Since January the situation has deteriorated and food is now scarce. Those building the dam anticipate that they will now be able to grow food throughout the year, rather than only during rainy seasons.

CHERRDA (Community Health, Employment, Relief, Rural Development and Agriculture) is a Mennonite development agency of the India General Conference Mennonite Church.

MCC worker Ben Sawatzky moves the first two baskets of earth.

"A professional team," "models of teaching, working and parenting together," "adventuresome pioneers" were some of the images spoken of Leland and Bertha Harder at a testimonial dinner in their honor sponsored by Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., May 25. Leland and Bertha Harder have completed 25 years of teaching at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, and in early June moved to North Newton, Kan.

The current social system in America does little to identify the children of alcoholics who are running the high risk of becoming alcoholics themselves or developing emotional problems, says Claudia Black, a California author and psychiatric social worker. Nearly 50 to 60 percent of identified alcoholics were raised in an alcoholic family, according to Black. Those who could best obtain help for these children—doctors, professional counselors, schoolteachers, pastors, friends and neighbors—too often overlook them, she said.

Administrators from various General Conference commissions and Mennonite Church departments met at GC central offices in Newton, Kan., on May 6 for half a day to discuss items of common concern. On the agenda were such topics as the recent Sun Belt strategy meeting in Houston, a draft of a proposal for an inter-Mennonite church planting organization and a discussion about the future use of video communications in Mennonite churches. The main purpose of the meeting, however, was simply to get better acquainted with each other's denominational programs.

MINISTERS

Jim Brown was installed June 5 as youth minister at the Waterloo-Kitchener (Ont.) United Mennonite Church. He is a graduate of Rosthern (Sask.) Junior College and Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg.

Hans Federau became acting leading minister at First United Mennonite Church, Vancouver, on July 1. He replaces *D. J. Nickel.*

Donald Longbottom became pastor at Grace Church, Pandora, Ohio, July 1. He is a graduate of Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary and pastored a Baptist church.

John Hess-Yoder became pastor at Peace Church, Portland, Ore., June 1.

Ben Rahn, who retired as minister at First Church, Aberdeen, Idaho, June 30, will become supply pastor at United Church, Atwater, Calif. *Lance Eisele*, who has been assistant pastor at Aberdeen, became pastor.

Vern Schertz has become pastor at Shalom Church, Tucson, Ariz.

Brown

Bergen

Edigers

Born

Derksen

N. Ferris

P. Ferris

WORKERS

David Bergen, Herbert (Sask.) Church, left June 28 for a two-year voluntary service assignment in Zaire with the Commission on Overseas Mission/Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission. He will be an administrative assistant for the church and mission based in Kinshasa. A graduate of Canadian Mennonite Bible College and Brandon University, he has also studied at the Summer Institute of Linguistics and Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind.

Frank Born, Emmanuel Church, Abbotsford, B.C., leaves Aug. 15 for a two-year voluntary service assignment in Taiwan under COM. He will teach English conversation and be engaged in youth ministry in Hwalien. He is a graduate of CMBC.

William Derksen, Peace Church, Richmond, B.C., leaves Sept. 7 for a four-year COM assignment in church planting and congregational work under the Japan Mennonite Christian Church Conference. A graduate of Wheaton (Ill.) College, his parents are Peter and Mary Derksen, who serve under COM in Japan.

Margaret Dyck, Eden Church, Chilliwack, B.C., began a one-year North America assignment in July. She has served under COM in Mexico since 1977. She is a nurse at the clinic of Nuevo Namiquipa, north of Cuauhtemoc, Chihuahua. She also served in Taiwan from 1968-71.

George and *Margaret Ediger*, United Mennonite Church, Mission, B.C., and Zoar Church, Waldheim, Sask., respectively, have taken an extended leave of absence from their work under COM in Colombia, where they served from 1963-1975, and again from 1979-1982.

Perry and *Nancy Ferris*, Silver Street Church, Goshen, Ind., leave Aug. 18 for a four-year COM assignment in Japan doing church planting and ministry under the Tokyo Area Fellowship of Mennonite Churches. Perry is a graduate of Sangamon State University, Springfield, Ill., and has studied at Taylor University and Mennonite Biblical Seminary. Nancy attended Taylor University and Mennonite Biblical Sem-

About 50 Vietnamese, most of whom had come to Canada in recent years as refugees, staged a demonstration to protest an Ottawa meeting involving the Vietnamese delegation which was spending two weeks in Canada early in May at the invitation of Mennonite Central Committee (Canada). The meeting was to have been with representatives of various non-governmental organizations, but when the banner-carrying protesters appeared, the delegates felt it best not to proceed. The protesters distributed literature describing the suffering of people in Vietnam under communist rule and argued that MCC did not adequately recognize that.

The fact that *Playboy* and *Penthouse* magazines are outselling *Time* and *Newsweek* is an indication of pornography's widespread acceptance in North America, said Maude Barlow, president of the Canadian Coalition Against Media Pornography, in a recent Ottawa speech. "The playboy philosophy," she said, "teaches young men to suppress compassion and caring for women in the search for personal gratification." She called for changes in the laws on censorship, the guidelines for the Canadian Film Development Corporation, the regulations for TV stations, as well as in local bylaws dealing with the sale of magazines in stores.

The next Project: Teach, an experience-based learning for church school teachers—preschool through adult—superintendents and pastors, will be held April 1-6, 1984, at Camp Ambassador, Route 8, Owen Sound, ON N4K 5W4, phone 519/376-3516. Cost is $160 (Canadian). For information contact Gerry J. Vandeworp, director, Project: Teach '84, Box 555, Elora, ON N0B 1S0, phone 519/846-5885.

RECORD

Dyck

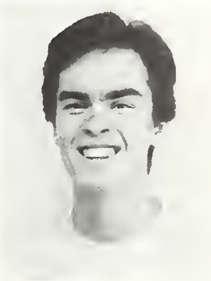
Flickinger

C. Gingerich

K. Gingerich

Kauffmans

Mueller


Friesen

Groots

Meck

inary. Perry is the son of the late Richard and Vonell Ferris, who were Baptist missionaries in Japan. Nancy is the daughter of Hugh and Janet Sprunger, COM missionaries in Hong Kong.

Robin K. Flickinger, Eden Church, Moundridge, Kan., began serving June 1 as an accountant for the Division of Administration of the General Conference. She is a 1983 graduate of Bethel College with a bachelor's degree in business. She replaces *Edna Ruth Mueller*, who retired as the conference's treasurer June 17 after nearly 34 years of service at central offices.

Han Friesen, Outlook (Sask.) Alliance Church, left June 30 for a two-year voluntary service assignment in Taiwan under COM. He will be administrative assistant at Mennonite Christian Hospital. A graduate of Columbia Bible Institute, Clearbrook, B.C., he is the son of Alvin and Ruby Friesen, former missionaries to Taiwan.

Kermit and *Clydene Gingerich*, Hesston (Kan.) Church, have been appointed administrative staff of Woodstock School in India, Kermit as principal and Clydene as an administrative assistant beginning in July for a two-year term. They will serve on a voluntary service basis through COM. Kermit is a graduate of Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., and Idaho State University. Clydene attended Hesston College. They previously served in India under COM from 1976-78.

Gary and *Maureen Groot*, Mount Royal Church, Saskatoon, leave Sept. 3 for a three-year assignment in Zaire under COM/AIMM. They will live in Kalonda, where Gary will serve as a medical doctor and Maureen in the public health program. Both are graduates of the University of Saskatchewan, Maureen in social work and Gary as a medical doctor.

Robert and *Mary Kauffman*, Mennonite Church of Normal, Ill., returned in June after a three-year COM term in Taiwan as business manager and treasurer, and guest house hosting. Mary was also responsible for the mission library.

Lynette Youndt Meck, Akron (Pa.) Church, became director of voluntary service with Mennonite Central Committee U.S. May 31. She replaces *Sally Schreiner*, who had held the position since February 1981.

COMMENTARY

The World Council of Churches' changing agenda

Walter Unger

The secular media have, in recent years, been focusing their attention on the political and social action involvements of the World Council of Churches. The council has usually been portrayed in a negative manner.

The August 1982 American edition of *Reader's Digest* highlighted some of the WCC's "blunders" in an article dramatically titled, "Karl Marx or Jesus Christ?" On Jan. 23, the CBS telecast *60 Minutes* aired "The Gospel According to Whom?" As in the *Reader's Digest* piece, WCC's Program to Combat Racism was blasted. Apparently, in 1978, $85,000 of PCR money was given to the Patriotic Front in Zimbabwe, whose guerrillas were fighting white-minority dominance in Rhodesia. WCC had designated the funds for humanitarian purposes such as aid to refugees.

Most evangelical journals have been highlighting the same issues raised by the secular media, with little attempt made to interpret the WCC in the broader context of its stated purpose and mission. What are the broader theological issues the council will be facing at its sixth, and possibly last (in this format) assembly?

A new mood. Aware of its marred image, the council *is* showing evidence of a marked shift in emphasis to doctrinal issues central to the Christian faith. The theme of the Sixth Assembly, meeting in Vancouver, July 24 - Aug. 10, is "Jesus Christ—the Life of the World." The Vancouver Assembly will bring together 930 delegates from 304 member churches around the world. They will be representing 440 million Christians from some 100 countries. It is not without good reason that the summer assembly is being hailed as the single most important international religious gathering ever to be held in Canada.

A recent WCC news release affirms that the mood of the council has changed in the past decade. "There is no backing off the central gospel mandate to stand with the dispossessed and the powerless. As the Melbourne Conference on Evangelism expressed it recently, 'God has a bias for the poor.' But increasingly there is a demand for a deeper theological rationale and a more lively spirituality to accompany the social activism."

Of the three planning and action units of the council, the Faith and Witness Unit is seen as being most important to the ministry of the WCC, although the Justice and Service Unit seems to get all the publicity. General Secretary Philip Potter believes that matters of faith and witness are central to the work of the council. In a recent address he said, "The first function and purpose of the World Council is 'to call the churches to the goal of visible unity in one faith and in one eucharistic fellowship expressed in worship and in common life in Christ, and to advance toward that unity in order that the world may believe.' "

The first clause of the WCC's constitution says, "The World Council of Churches is a fellowship of churches which confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Savior according to the Scriptures and therefore seek to fulfill together their common calling to the glory of the One God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit." The WCC is not a super church but a visible international expression of the ecumenical movement. As the *United Church Observer* notes, the WCC does not speak *for* the churches but *to* them.

Key theological questions. There *is* a concern for sound doctrine among many of the leaders in the ecumenical movement. If the WCC takes its Vancouver theme seriously, some heavy theological confrontations will occur.

1. The affirmation of the theme will lead Christians into difficult confrontation with people of other living faiths who hold other convictions about God and about the origin and purpose of life. For example, native Canadians will share their spirituality in Vancouver; four major panels on interfaith dialogue will be held—Jewish, Hindu, Buddhist and Sikh. Will the WCC settle for a syncretism of diverse beliefs and end up with an affirmation of universalism?
2. The question will have to be answered, With secular humanism abounding and talk about God becoming less and less meaningful in today's world, is there a way to speak less theocentrically about "Jesus and the life of the world" than the Bible does and still remain Christian?
3. Assuming a biblical Christology is honestly pursued, how will Christ's true divinity as well as his true humanity be accounted for?
4. How will WCC theologians relate their understanding of the mystery of Jesus Christ to their understanding of the church—its ministry and sacraments?
5. Probably of most importance will be defining the *core* of the gospel and its integral parts. M. M. Thomas, writing on this topic approvingly quotes an evangelical statement on "Gospel and Culture" (a follow-up of the Lausanne Congress): "The most insidious form of syncretism in the world today is the attempt to mix a privatized gospel of personal forgiveness with a worldly (and even demonic) attitude to wealth and power." On this point the evangelical and WCC spokesmen agree: "Christ's victory over demons of collective life is an integral part of the whole gospel."

Why be interested in WCC? Although we may disagree with much of the theology and many of the actions of the council, we still recognize that there are literally millions of brothers and sisters in Christ in its member churches. Furthermore, we are not so parochial in our thinking that we believe that Mennonites have perceived the totality of God's truth and along with like-minded groups are the only ones really doing the work of the kingdom in this world. We need to appreciate every good effort put forth by Christians of all denominations to minister to the spiritual and physical needs of the almost 5 billion inhabitants on this globe.

Certainly we can *converse* with those in the ecumenical movement, even though we don't unite. We can learn a great deal from other Christians and hopefully we can share our vision of the Christian life and witness with them to their profit. John Howard Yoder observes that less unity is needed to converse than to commune. He adds, "If, on the other hand, we commune where there is actually only sufficient unity for conversing, we cheapen both unity and truth and do our brother no good."

Walter Unger is academic dean at Columbia Bible Institute, 2940 Clearbrook Road, Clearbrook, B.C. V2T 2Z8. This article was shared with Meetinghouse publications by Mennonite Brethren Herald.

LETTERS

I make copies

Thanks for the great articles by Pearl Bartel and Helen Friesen (May 10 issue). I trust it's okay occasionally to make a copy of an article to give to someone who doesn't receive *The Mennonite* (maybe they'll get interested). I do this from time to time as pastor. *Tim Epp, Grace Mennonite Church, 598 Ellendale Ave., Dallas, OR 97338-3095*

June 13

Editor's note: It is a blessing to know articles are being used to reach out to others. We know many others are doing the same (the Conference of Mennonites in Canada this year is giving copies of several other articles to all its delegates and guests) and thank God that in this way the ministry of The Mennonite *is multiplied.*

We don't mind if subscribers occasionally copy a few pages. Permission should be sought for reproducing larger quantities, however.

Look at consequences

Regarding Eastern District Conference resolution to recall and annul ordained women pastors (page 250, May 24 issue), someone seems to have forgotten that the right to make all final decisions, such as choosing a pastor, belongs to each congregation—*not* the district.

If this resolution were to be adopted in 1984, it would set a dangerous precedent.

Why? Because it would open the door for future resolutions being adopted in which each EDC congregation might have to (1) publish their newsletter in Pennsylvania Dutch instead of English, (2) buy their pastor a gift subscription to *SHUN* magazine, (3) appoint only male deaconnesses, nursery attendants, conference delegates and Sunday school teachers, (4) prominently display the name "Mennonite" above every church entrance, (5) buy and use *The Mennonite Hymnal* and *The Foundation Series* curriculum for every Sunday school class and (6) subscribe to the Every Home Plan for *The Mennonite.*

Here's another resource to help us reach a consensus of opinion: *Leadership and Authority in the Life of the Church* (61-page booklet), a summary statement adopted by the Mennonite Church General Assembly in August 1981. *Harold Shelly, 229 N. Scenic St., Allentown, PA 18104*

June 15

Brings courage to others

Thank you to Helen Friesen for the touching story of her life (May 10 issue). It is one of the most moving and inspiring things I've read. It should be given wide circulation. In relating her own painful experiences, Helen brings hope, help and courage to many others. It brings to mind the words of Simeon in Luke 2:35 spoken to Mary: "A sword shall pierce through your own soul also, that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed." *Ruth Peters, 319 Center Ave. S., Madelia, MN 56062*

June 15

Admonition from Taiwan

Thank you very much for sending me *The Mennonite.*

Recently I was informed by our pastor that you held back one issue of *The Mennonte* from Taiwan, due to a letter concerning Pastor Liu, who left Taiwan. I know you were requested to do so and it came from love to pastor Liu, but I, from my love in Christ, have to tell you your love went in the wrong direction. I am sure you know the truth and you can judge the matter. As an editor, I believe you have the obligation to tell the truth to your readers. How can you use your right to cheat us? I have to inform you that your mistake will negatively influence church growth in Taiwan. Many of our pastors are unsatisfied with you and missionaries in Taiwan.

Now it's already many months. Pastor Liu came back to Taiwan last October but made no contact with any of our pastors, missionaries and church members. He only contacted Pastor Lin, who is now also in the United States, and his church has no pastor. It is the fruit of your mistake. I love our church and Mennonites. My suggestion is to reconsider the matter and to tell your readers the truth again with your admission of the mistake in printing. If you can't do so, I consider you unfit for this position. Certainly I can't request you to resign the position, but I request you stop sending me *The Mennonite* once it does not come from a pure heart of right belief.

I am sorry to write this, but I do believe it comes from my love to you and our churches. *Norman Chien, Box 68, 912 Taipei, Taiwan*

June 23

Editor's note: We received a letter from Taiwan and printed it immediately in our Aug. 31, 1982, issue. However, Commission on Overseas Mission personnel held back Taiwan copies because of their concern for Adam Liu.

I would urge the COM people to openly discuss this with you and hereby also invite them to share their reasoning with our readers.

Youth pastor needed

Position of youth pastor available at Foothills Mennonite Church in Calgary.

Please contact:
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Pastoral Search Committee
2115 Urbana Road, N.W.
Calgary, AB T2N 4B9.

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Waldemar Janzen

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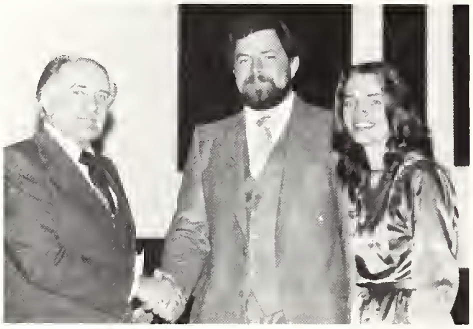
Dealing with pastoral needs

Marg Rempel

Among the agenda for a March 1, 1982, congregational meeting at Steinbach (Man.) Mennonite Church was the question, Do we need more pastoral help? In our fellowship of 420-plus members, were we placing too great a burden on one salaried pastor? Several lay ministers, the team of deacons and the program committee all work directly with the pastor, sharing at least some of the leadership tasks. A part-time secretary helps with correspondence, typing reports and putting the weekly church bulletins together. And numerous other groups and committees in the church assume various responsibilities.

The question of hiring additional help cannot be discussed without considering—both individually and corporately—another introspective question. Are each of us as members carrying our share of the load? Are we truly a "priesthood of believers" ministering to one another, sensitive and responsive to each other's hurts and joys? Or are we at least thinking if not saying, "I won't bother helping out this time. After all, that's the pastor's job; he gets paid for it."



Being commissioned as a summer assistant to pastor Abe Neufeld (left) at Steinbach Mennonite Church on Sunday, May 15, is John Petkau with his wife, Carol. John focused the challenge of sharing in the various aspects of the church's ministry with the words of the prophet Zechariah: "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the Lord."

Our one most common reason (excuse?) for our hesitation to take on responsible positions in the church is—you guessed it—our already heavy schedules. Calendars marked weeks and months in advance with demands from and obligations to work, family, community, church and conferences.

Do we need more pastoral help? seemed also dependent on answers to other related questions. How large do we want our congregation to be? At what point does largeness contribute to lostness within the group? Is it in our future to begin a sister congregation?

Our decision was to hire a summer assistant for our pastor. On Sunday, May 15, our congregation commissioned John Petkau as a short-term salaried staff person on our church pastoral team. A graduate of Elim Bible Institute in Altona, Man., John led our college and career group this past year while studying at Winnipeg Bible College.

In the commissioning service John focused the challenge of sharing in the various aspects of the church's ministry with the words of the prophet Zechariah: "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the Lord." Part of the ongoing challenge is to let our church's future be shaped by the priorities of God's Spirit.

Edigers start new chapter

Linda Sawatzky

On Sunday, April 24, Ferd Ediger was installed as pastor of Grace Mennonite Church in Regina.

Following the installation, words of gratitude and welcome were extended to the Edigers by congregational chairman Ian Wilson and deacon board chairman Otto Driedger. In his comments, Ian noted that we were beginning a new chapter at Grace Mennonite, the pages of which were blank, and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and with Ferd as our leader, we will work together as one, pastor and congregation, to fill those pages with events and activities which will further the kingdom of God.

Sixty-six out-of-town guests were in attendance, including the Edigers' son Jim of Toronto and many friends from three other churches. Representatives from First Mennonite (Saskatoon), North Star (Drake) and Aberdeen (Sask.) Church shared greetings and words of love and affirmation from their congregations. Several letters were read from those unable to attend.

Ediger, 60, was born in Drake, Sask., and studied at Bethel College (North Newton, Kan.) and at Mennonite Biblical Seminary (Elkhart, Ind.), graduating with a bachelor's degree in 1950 and a divinity degree in 1953. Several years later he also did graduate work in anthropology. Viola was born in Inman, Kan., served two years in Mennonite Central Committee relief work in Paraguay before her marriage, and graduated from Bethel College in 1951 with a bachelor's degree in education.

Left to right: Ian Wilson, Viola Ediger, Ferd Ediger, Otto Driedger and Henry Patkau. Driedger welcomes Edigers to Regina.

The Edigers have combined missionary service, teaching and study throughout their careers. In 1953 they went to Japan with the Commission on Overseas Mission. There they studied the Japanese language and served for 30 years. Since 1965 they supported their ministry by teaching English at Japanese universities and other schools. They pastored various churches in Japan and were instrumental in beginning five Japanese Mennonite churches, four of them in Tokyo. For the past three years they were co-directors of the Japanese Anabaptist Center in Tokyo. The Edigers have three children: John, a student in Norman, Okla.; Anne, a teacher at the University of California, San Diego; and James, a performing folk musician in Toronto.

Kampuchea is in the middle

Murray Hiebert

"Once again Cambodia is 'the land in-between,' a contesting ground for rival powers," Emory Swank, former U.S. ambassador to Cambodia said after a recent three-week study mission to Vietnam, Thailand and Kampuchea (Cambodia). "Its people (are) consumed in civil war, its economic development (is) retarded by circumstances beyond Cambodian control."

Three other retired U.S. diplomats accompanied Swank on the mission: James Leonard, former deputy U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, Paul Kattenburg, an Asian specialist now teaching political science at the University of South Carolina, and Donald Ranard, an Asian specialist currently working as director of the Center for International Policy. The center, a Washington-based organization, sponsored the trip. I accompanied the delegation as a consultant.

Since Vietnam's toppling of the Pol Pot regime in Kampuchea in 1979, China, Thailand and its non-communist neighbors, and the United States have exerted military, economic and diplomatic pressures to force Vietnam to withdraw its troops from Kampuchea and broaden the Vietnamese-installed government in Phnom Penh, the capital of Kampuchea.

But the study mission found that the people in Kampuchea are still traumatized by Pol Pot's rule, during which perhaps a million people were executed or died from hunger and overwork. Most of the Kampucheans with whom the delegation talked regard the Vietnamese troops in Kampuchea as a guarantee against the return of Pol Pot, whose forces along the Thai-Kampuchean border continue fighting the Vietnamese-backed regime in Phnom Penh.

"We shall never play with death again," Kampuchea's Foreign Minister Hun Sen told the visiting diplomats when he was asked if he would agree to a broadening of the government and a Vietnamese troop withdrawal.

In Vietnam, the visiting diplomats found Hanoi determined to "stay the course" in Kampuchea, despite the costs of the pressures on Vietnam's economy. For the Vietnamese, Kampuchea is a matter of survival. They believe Vietnam can be secure only if it has a friendly ally in Kampuchea along its southwestern border. "Because of the Chinese threat," Vietnamese Foreign Minister Nguyen Co Thach told the group, "there is no question of us leaving Kampuchea." He was referring to Chinese troops stationed along Vietnam's northern frontier and China's military aid to Kampuchean guerrillas along Kampuchea's border with Thailand. Hanoi says it will bring home its troops only after Peking agrees to end its aid to insurgents fighting the pro-Vietnamese government in Kampuchea.

Meanwhile, "China still seems determined to 'teach Vietnam a lesson,' " Swank concluded. It is "offended by the overthrow of Pol Pot, whom it supported, and alarmed at the alignment of Vietnam with a hostile Soviet Union."

Chinese diplomats in Bangkok told the U.S. visitors that once Vietnam withdraws from Kampuchea, China would be ready to sign a non-aggression treaty and restore normal relations with Vietnam.

In recent months, China has raised the Kampuchea problem with the Soviet Union, Vietnam's major ally. China hopes that the Soviet Union's desire to improve relations with Peking will prompt Moscow to pressure Vietnam into negotiating a solution to the Kampuchea impasse. So far, however, the Soviets have refused to discuss it.

Thailand, meanwhile, cooperates with China against Vietnam. A ranking Thai Foreign Ministry official told the delegation that Vietnam's invasion of Kampuchea "threatens the security of Thailand." As a result, Thailand provides sanctuary to Kampuchean guerrillas fighting the Vietnamese and turns a blind eye to Chinese arms shipments through Thai territory.

The United States works in tandem with Thailand and China to diplomatically isolate and economically pressure Vietnam. The State Department told the delegation before its departure for Southeast Asia that any shift in U.S. policy would be interpreted as acquiescence to Vietnam's occupation of Kampuchea.

But following their three-week study mission, the diplomats concluded that U.S. policy toward Indochina is "a dubious and wasting asset." U.S. policy, they said, is not forcing Vietnam out of Kampuchea and is pushing both Vietnam and Kampuchea into greater dependence on the Soviet Union.

The group recommended that the United States move away from its current support for the ousted Pol Pot regime at the United Nations and instead support leaving Kampuchea's UN seat empty.

Several of the delegates also recommended that the United States begin trying to develop diplomatic relations with Vietnam. They suggested that Washington begin by lifting the trade embargo against Vietnam and easing restrictions against voluntary agencies, such as the Mennonite Central Committee, which are trying to provide aid to Indochina.

Murray Hiebert, co-director of the Indochina Project, 100 Maryland Ave. NE, Washington, DC 20002, worked for MCC in Vietnam and Laos from 1973 to 1978.

China
Burma
Laos
Mekong River
Thailand
Kampuchea
Phnom Penh
Vietnam
SOUTHEAST ASIA
Malaysia

All are ministers

Ordination, A Biblical-Historical View, *by Marjorie Warkentin (Eerdmans, 1982, 188 pages)*

Reviewed by Jacob T. Friesen, director of Ministerial Leadership Services

Warkentin's aim in this book is to examine the historical, biblical and theological sources of the right of ordination. She believes that the priesthood of all believers loses its meaning unless we recognize that true ministry—Christian service—can be practiced by each Christian according to one's spiritual gifts, regardless of ordination. According to Warkentin, "The vocabulary of the New Testament permits no pyramidal forms. . . . Ordination can have no function in such a system, for it sets up barriers where none should exist, that is, between one Christian and another, and hinders the mutual service by which the church is edified."

She traces the historical development of ordination. It was "an established custom by the fourth century, and an integral part of the doctrine of apostolic succession. Luther's doctrinal reformation shook the theory of apostolic succession, but the ordination tradition, though transformed theologically, survived as a guarantor of authority in a period of instability." Eventually, "mutual discernment of gifts among believers became unnecessary, with a consequent loss of a sense of community." Instead of admonishing and teaching one another, believers took their problems to their "ministers." In addition to being a preacher, evangelist, administrator of the ordinance, marrier, burier and the overseer of a "team," he now became a counselor as well. Was one Christian really "called" to all of these roles in the church?

"The radical New Testament society called for a new pattern of leadership," Warkentin writes. "The key concept in the structuring of the new communities was to be service. Service to God was no longer the prerogative of priest and Levite, but was to be the privilege of all believers."

"Why is there no evidence for the ordination of pastors or elders in the first two centuries of the church?" she asks. "Actually the practice of the laying on of hands followed closely on the heels of the rise of infant baptism."

Warkentin has done a thorough historical and biblical study. The questions she asks about ordination are long overdue in the Mennonite church. Her insights and conclusions deserve to be tested with serious biblical study. She writes with zeal and passion that is confrontive and captivating. The reader suspects that this personal involvement may have colored her research. However, the conclusions are so refreshing that this prejudice certainly deserves no greater indictment than that written by men on the subject of ordination for the past 18 centuries.

Becoming the church

Community of Faith, *by Evelyn and James Whitehead (Seabury Press, 1982, 208 pages)*

Reviewed by Steven G. Schmidt, pastor of New Creation Fellowship, 417 W. 11th, Newton, KS 67114

Another book on community? Isn't community a tired subject? Out of vogue? Hasn't it all been said?

Working with this book, I repented of these first thoughts as I realized anew that Jesus passed the baton—both his work and his Spirit—to a faith community. The Christian faith—and the very life of Jesus himself—resides today in specific communities. And each church can surely use all the help it can get to be that "city on the hill" that Jesus intended.

Community of Faith offers help. The Whiteheads bring together, in a way that I have not found before, sociological insights and Christian life insights. A good blend of science and faith is achieved in the book, to the enhancement of both.

The Whiteheads have obvious experience in faith, in community and in sociology, and they trust readers to supply their own experiences to interact with the written material. Each chapter has a "reflection" section in which readers are asked to recall specific experiences out of their lives which would be relevant to the material. Each chapter also lists additional resources for the subjects covered in that chapter.

Some subjects covered are pluralism in the church, aspects of/definitions of community, basic questions of group life, personal and group dreams and God's kingdom, and communication and conflict.

I recommend *Community of Faith* for people who are serious about becoming the church. While it is written from a Catholic background, it has much to offer both clergy and laity of all faiths.

Abusers and the abused

Family Violence: Poems on the Pathology, *edited by Mary McAnally (Moonlight Publications, 1982)*

Reviewed by Ruby Baresch, 1406 Tennessee, Lawrence, KS 66044

Family Violence is a collection that is unique not only in its subject but in its complexity, for it contains poems from the personae of the abused person—child, woman, man—and the abuser. The complexity inherent in family violence is addressed head-on, perhaps best expressed by Alta when she says, after describing how she treated her daughter: "this is unbearable. how can i write it. no wonder it is not written. or if it is written, not published. or if it is published, not recognized. no one could relate to such constant pain except another mother wishing to treat her children well."

In this volume it is written. Alta with her familiar sensitivity shows how the same person can be at once victim and abuser. That the abused person plays a role in the drama is expressed in the short poem "From His Hands" by Linda Bart and in the longer "Housewife" by Heather McHugh. Adrienne Rich and Richard Shelton refer to the connection between war and family violence. The chilling poem "Mom, About the Gun . . ." by Kathryn Sierra is one of several about the way that violence begets violence.

The simplest poems to relate to are the ones written in the victim's voice. The most moving is "molested child" by Terry Kennedy, which begins, "i don't shiver/when you ask." The despair of the woman with nowhere to go except back to the place where she will be beaten again, the fear of the child who knows that violence is imminent with the slam of a car door, and more. On one level, the fact of abuse is all we need to know in order to affirm that it must stop. But it is not simple.

From these poems one must conclude that healing is yet a long way off. Perhaps it is not possible to talk of healing until the abuse stops, and as the editor says in her afterword, we must stop it now: "No more excuses. No more long explanations. Just stop it. We cannot as a society endure or accept it any longer." Amen.

MEDITATION

To marry a minister

Harold was angry at God, and why not? After all, when you obey God's rules and try to live your life God's way, one would expect that God could do better than take your dearest hopes and smash them all to pieces.

Catherine was a beautiful, talented, Christian girl, and Christian girls are hard to find in a Buddhist country like Taiwan. But Catherine said she wanted to marry a minister, and that was not at all what Harold felt called and gifted to do. And besides, Catherine's mother thought they were both just too young. "Well, if that's the way it has to be, God, OK. I trusted you to give me a Christian wife, but if you just won't do it, then I'll have to find one in my own way," Harold decided.

After finishing their education, they went their own ways—Catherine to work for a Christian broadcasting service in Kaohsung, and Harold entered the Chinese Navy. During this time he met a lovely, talented, devoutly Buddhist woman named Ja-me who was studying to teach music. All during military service he courted Ja-me, but occasionally he did see Catherine due to their history of being from the same school and church.

Perhaps I can convert Ja-me, he thought. Other men have brought their wives into the church this way. (In Chinese society it is more likely that the wife will adopt the customs and belief of the husband's family than the other way round.) But Ja-me was a different case. Not only did she persistently refuse to consider Christian belief herself, it eventually became clear that Harold would be expected to adopt Buddhist practice, were he to marry into this family. The inevitable break came, and Harold's hopes were dashed again. He hadn't been able to marry the Christian girl, but he couldn't give up his faith to marry the Buddhist—no matter how much he loved her.

Harold was now out of the navy and working for Digital Equipment, Taiwan, Ltd. when he heard that Mennonite Christian Hospital in his hometown of Hwalien was accepting applications for a new administrative assistant to begin training immediately. About the same time Catherine happened to visit Taipei. She had heard how depressed he was and stopped by to see her old friend.

Harold and Catherine were formally engaged in the Chinese way in her home in Hwalien on Jan. 2, 1982, and were married on Nov. 13, 1982. After waiting six years, mother no longer objected to their age, and Catherine is happy to have a husband in an administrative "ministry" at Mennonite Christian Hospital.

Catherine is presently pastor of the Meilun Mennonite Church in Hwalien, assuming responsibilities following the transfer of the former pastor to a Mennonite church in Taipei.
Phil Friesen

CONTENTS

Mennonites believe in peace, but we often have a hard time showing it. Before we know it, we are busy putting each other down and setting up sides for people to choose. It could happen again at Bethlehem '83.

This issue shares an article on peace from non-Mennonite churches in Europe. We feature several articles that reflect a caring for people—especially hurting people. Our prayer is that all of us think of people who need God's love (that includes all of us too) as we discuss and pray and struggle together to see Christ as our Cornerstone in all we do.

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EDITORIAL

Cozy Catacombs conference

Abraham and Sarah Menno set out from Dallas for the great camp meeting. It had an unusual name—Catacombs '83. Out east in the Atlantic megalopolis. The Mennos had debated whether they should go. It was to be a joint meeting with the "old" Christians. The issues were sexuality, peace and justice, civil obedience.

What's the matter with those bureaucrats at Newton and Elkhart? Christians should be careful who they associate with. And should not the issues be simple—evangelism, missions, prayer?

Why a name like Catacombs '83? A tactic by the leaders to make it appear we'll take the Bible sincerely at this meeting?

Sarah had stocked the Winnebago with lots of food—Menno style. The television was in place, air conditioner tested, scenic route and campsites marked on the map.

Abraham had made the mistake—just before leaving—of looking at *Weekend* magazine. It told of refugees pouring into Ethiopia from Somalia. One full-color photo particularly haunted him; he could see only the naked child's back and the grave face of the doctor.

A troubled Abraham pointed the Winnebago east. Once on the main road—cruise control (check), air control (check), stereo (check)—maybe Catacombs '83 would drive away those dying children.

Sarah was browsing at the program. "I think it will be great to meet our distant cousin Mennos from Manitoba. They will agree with our church that we should not be discussing sex and peace and justice, and there's no place in the Bible for resisting a government in godly countries like the United States and Canada. I hope we can get these camp meetings back to preaching the Bible, more prayer for missions and emphasis on evangelism."

Abraham seemed strangely reflective. He gave the wheel to Sarah and went back to see if he could catch the news on television. "Oh no, not that again," he muttered as the Central American chaos loomed square in his face. Another massacre, further comments by officials ("Who represents what down there anyway?") and the gory film footage.

He flicked it off and opened his Bible. It fell at Matthew 19:16-22: ". . . one came up to him. . . . 'Teacher, what good deed must I do, to have eternal life?' And he (Jesus) said . . . 'keep the commandments.' . . . The young man said, 'All these have I observed; what do I still lack?' Jesus said . . . 'go, sell what you possess and give to the poor . . . and come, follow me.' . . . he went away sorrowful; for he had great possessions."

"What if *I* sold everything and gave it to Africa or Central America? It would be a tiny drop in an ocean of sins," mused Abraham.

In a commentary on Matthew, Abraham read of the Wesleys preaching adamantly against social injustice. Evangelist Edward Beecher (1835) said the task of the church is "to preach the gospel to every creature and to reorganize human society in accordance with the law of God." Billy Sunday preached woman suffrage, prison reform and equal rights for all races. Further, the book said, early Christians effectually changed racial, social and economic conditions in many countries.

Lest you think conditions are different today, said the writer, remember that on any Sunday—in many communities—the power structure is in our churches. And Christians are expected by God to alleviate injustice, oppression and suffering.

No, said the author, Christians should not try to offer simplistic intellectual answers to complex global problems, but we can never be excused for failing to act morally. Maybe we can't provide the map, but the world should never doubt our compass. He added, "If we really accepted the literal statements of the Gospels, we would be most heavily engaged in social work and most heatedly preaching social concerns." Upon checking, he found that the author was president of a Southern Baptist home mission board.

Abraham took the wheel and started to speak, "Sarah, I see on the program some places for solid Bible study; it looks like the sermons on 'Christ our Cornerstone' are right on, and nobody will stop us from praying as much as we like. Maybe Matthew 25 should be *our* theme for this meeting. Let's think of *people* who are hurting, even when issues are discussed."

Sarah didn't know what to say. In her silence she thought again, "Catacombs '83"? Does that mean "people"? *Bernie Wiebe*

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THE MENNONITE

OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST

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There is a hope planted in Mennonite history that is being examined with growing approval by a shrinking Western Christian populace that finds in Mennonite ideals a valid biblicism for secular times.

It runs against the grain of this historian to predict the future, at least without a word of caution. Predictions are perilous and they may be foolish. Perhaps historians are wary of predictions because they know that one cannot simply project trends of any one point in time into the future and expect them to continue. The more pervasive, deeper trends of any culture are the ones most difficult to discern. A classic example is the Roman Pliny's assurances about the impermanence of the new religion, Christianity, in his letter to the Emperor Trajan at the beginning of the second century.

Historians are too conscious of novelty in the affairs of people and nations, and many Christian historians are too conscious of free will, to rest easily with prediction.

In the midst of uncertainty the best procedure is to offer several scenarios for the directions of Mennonite history in the next 100 years.

Scenario A: Continuation of present Mennonite church trends. Mennonites increasingly enter the larger society and absorb not only its standard of living but also the entire range of its attitudes—about the human being, society, culture and the arts. Within this encounter a distinctive sense of Mennonitism will diminish in some Mennonites until they begin to search for another set of ethical and religious emphases, clusters of attitudes that one might label secularism, spiritualism, intellectualism, salvationism—each by itself captivating and meaningful.

In this process a distinctive Mennonitism will disappear among some Mennonites. Historically, Mennonitism has meant (1) a biblicism based on congregational discernment and understanding, (2) a community of economic sharing, (3) an ethic of love which rejects participation in war and even often in the larger society's decision-making processes, and (4) a salvationism grounded in the local form of God's people that one joins as a young adult out of personal inner conviction.

Within our trend toward an absorption by the larger society, the principal foes of Mennonitism are professionalism and individualism. Both destroy a communitarian Christianity. Each propels its adherents toward a type of religious emphasis that is individually salvationist. We know the fundamentalist form of that salvationism; we are probably less prepared to accept the equally individualistic high church form of it, a Eucharistic salvationism, which an increasing number of ethnic Mennonites will find attractive in the next 100 years, both for religious and aesthetic reasons.

I guess that within 25-50 years a Mennonitism which has absorbed the larger culture will divide, as Christians in that larger society will divide, into two camps that will include both Catholics and Protestants: (1) those for whom religion is exclusively a matter of personal salvation and (2) those who see in Christianity an impelling social ethic. Such a division may well dwarf the vehemence of the older Catholic-Protestant split.

I seriously doubt that Mennonitism can survive without a planned pattern of separation from the world. Ironically, in this respect the Amish appear to me to be much better off than we are, more likely to survive. They know what they are up against; Mennonites seem not to want to recognize the degree to which our rapid acculturation has and will so dilute Mennonitism that scarcely any of it can survive. Perhaps we should be less scornful of physical forms of separation from the world.

The drastic changes in the Mennonite experience are only partly reflected in this scene. From a rural people we have largely become urbanized and need to face those changes.

Scenario B: The West turns totalitarian, in either an Orwellian *1984* or a Bolshevik manner. It seems to me probable that the range and magnitude of problems will be so gigantic that people will begin to think that only a drastic change in *form* of government, instead of a mere change in personnel, will solve those problems. Historically democracy has been fragile and short-lived because it could not resolve the larger problems in society.

Briefly listed, society's problems are (1) *economic malaise*—an economy that rejects a large segment of its working people by phasing down industrial production in favor of social services and technological production, (2) *racism*—whites against blacks, Indians and Latinos, beyond the ability of local authorities to control, (3) *breakdown of cities*—physically and socially so that they become too dangerous for habitation, (4) *pollution*—massive poisoning of our environment, (5) *drug addiction*—a large body of people destroying themselves with drugs, like China in the 1890s with opium, (6) *determinism*—a growing biological-psychological determinism in the populace as a whole. People who think that they are free will resist a totalitarian state; those who think themselves unfree, the pawns of some larger set of forces, will not.

Although I do not want totalitarianism, I think Mennonitism has a better chance of survival under it. Malcolm Muggeridge suggests that the most important development of the past 75 years of world history has been the utter failure of a determined totalitarian atheism to destroy Christianity in Russia. Although I do not hold up the Russian Mennonites as models in every particular of Mennonitism, they do show us a Christian vitality that has durability—the durability of eternity. Historically Mennonites have understood, in their bones perhaps more than in their heads, that their enemy is the state; they have endured states that offered their own religions as supreme: Constantinian Christianity, pagan nationalism or spurious spiritualism. Usually Mennonites have withstood the insistent pressure of that kind of enemy, and knew in what direction their own God-given salvation lay. I suspect that Mennonites would return to such an understanding in the event of totalitarianism.

Scenario C: Mennonites take seriously their special calling among Christians. Mennonites have no right to expect that God will act on our behalf so that we, or Mennonitism, might merely *survive* as a sort of ethnicity. What Christians can expect is that God will so direct affairs that some type of Christianity not unlike our best expectations of Anabaptism-Mennonitism will be called forth within his providence, and that if ethnic Mennonites do not respond to it, other people will.

If Mennonites do respond, some of the following will occur: (1) We will develop a vigorous mission outreach, both local and international, based upon the attractiveness of the "city set upon a hill" and our own oral witness—in short, a church that will exemplify the humility and attractiveness of Jesus.

2. We will engage in an economic sharing that would reduce the economic disparities among us now and make us a brotherhood/sisterhood body under Christ. It would need to be an economic sharing that extended beyond the church body, locally and internationally.

3. We will exercise a thorough discipling among ourselves, one which will reduce individualism to manageable proportions, in which the individual will again be subordinate to the group. Only such a group-church can be attractive enough to invite and hold those restless spirits that are weary of Western materialism—in short, to attract converts to a genuine Anabaptism-Mennonitism. This would need to be a discipline that encourages and builds mutual trust and confidence, in which a leadership responsive to needs on all sides could emerge and function for the benefit of all.

Ironically our gradual losing of Mennonite distinctiveness comes at a time when those Mennonite particulars are being examined with growing approval by a shrinking Western Christian populace that finds in Mennonite ideals a valid biblicism for secular times. •

What are we learning from our past and present for the future? I sense both pessimism and optimism.

Here are four challenges for Mennonites

John Friesen

Mennonites in Canada and the United States are a diverse group. Some Mennonites have American roots which go back 300 years, others immigrated after World War II. Some can trace their Mennonite ancestry to the 16th-century Anabaptist beginnings; others made the Anabaptist-Mennonite heritage their own less than a generation ago. Some have thoroughly adopted the lifestyle and values of the Canadian or U.S. cultures; others have developed their own counterculture. Some witness to their faith in God through active programs of missions and evangelism; others witness by living their faith in quiet simplicity.

The world in which we live is constantly changing. During the past 300 years Canada and the United States have changed from colonial outposts of European countries to major partners in the community of nations. Pioneer frontiers have been transformed into bustling, modern societies. Travel has changed from stagecoach, to railway, to cars and to planes. The quiet, secluded, rural enclaves of the earliest settlers have been sucked into the stream of urbanization. The simple ethical mores of the stable, rural village and community have been overwhelmed by complex lifestyles created by a mobile and rootless society.

The future promises even more change and less security. The threat of nuclear war will continue to hang over our heads. As we become more affluent, the energy shortfall will threaten this affluence and cause anger and fear. The economic dominance of the northern nations will be challenged by southern nations. The combined threat to national prestige, wealth and power may create new, irrational nationalisms which may lash out in unpredictable, destructive fury.

I can see a lot of opportunities and challenges for Mennonites to express the best of our heritage in the future. Our Anabaptist beginnings were in the crucible of a changing and exploding world. Anabaptism was led by people who were breaking out of established molds—former priests, women, middle-class artisans, lower-class nobility and former peasants. Even though in the intervening centuries the radical beliefs of the Anabaptists were often incarnated in safe, secluded, stable, rural enclaves, there is no reason why these revolutionary beliefs cannot be expressed again in a changing, mobile, urban world.

Here are four areas in which we will have opportunities in the future: communicating our beliefs and values to others, being peacemakers, establishing community and fostering economic sharing.

1.

Mennonites will have opportunity to be a witnessing church. During the past decades we have been entering every facet of society. Never before have we had such an opportunity to communicate and express our values and beliefs. The issue will probably not be whether we will witness but how. The pessimist in me says we will continue to copy the programs of mass evangelism. Our message will be individualistic, "spiritual" and concerned with technique and num-

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bers. Our evangelism will save the souls of people who will go on expressing racial prejudice, economic injustice and militant nationalism.

The optimist in me hopes we will discover the biblical understanding of witness and learn to witness to the person and to the society, combine word and deed, and base our witness in the dynamic of the church.

2.

Mennonites will face the challenge to provide a peace witness. For 460 years we have been known as a peace church. We have rejected the idolatry of nationalism, refused to take the lives of fellow human beings and said that peace must express itself in acts of reconciliation.

The pessimist in me quakes at the prospects of witness in this area. I fear we will be unable to relate peace to our understanding of salvation and that we will relegate peace to the position of a Mennonite peculiarity. I fear that as our energy supplies are threatened, we will be caught up in a new, militant nationalism within which we will be unwilling to raise the biblical questions about its demonic nature.

I fear we will not be able to free ourselves from the corroding influence of a civil religion which will link God and country in a righteous crusade against the evil forces which seem poised to destroy our supposedly Christian lifestyles. I fear that as our affluence is threatened we will lose interest in the plight of the poor and oppressed at home and abroad.

The optimist in me hopes we will allow our views on peace to be shaped as we read our Bibles, listen to God, learn from our forebears and dialogue with each other. I hope we will forge ahead to create new structures of peacemaking, reconciliation and justice. We may even find new strength as we cooperate with people from other confessions who are also convinced that peace is God's will.

3.

Mennonites will be challenged to rediscover the dynamic vitality and strength of community. During the past three centuries the context of decision making for our understanding of salvation, our programs of evangelism, our economic patterns, our choices of vocation, has shifted from the community to the individual.

In the world of the future we will need to discover how to create community—a new sense of belonging to each other in commitment. We learned to create community in one setting. Will we learn it in another?

The pessimist in me says we will probably fail. We are already too enthralled with the lure of individualism and with the freedom from accountability that it provides. I fear that the weak and the strong among us will not be able to see their destinies intertwined in each other's futures.

The optimist in me believes new patterns of commitment and mutual responsibility can be created. In our history we have frequently lived in contexts in which mutual responsibility among people of diverse ethnic and economic backgrounds was not to be taken for granted. I believe it possible to create new structures which will express this biblical emphasis.

4.

Mennonites will face the challenge to share economically. Our forebears in the 16th century critiqued the economic injustices and exploitations of their age in a variety of ways. The critiques all included some form of sharing, equality and concern for the needy.

During the next century, when Canada and the United States may go through some serious economic adjustments, we will have the opportunity to creatively contribute this dimension of the gospel.

The pessimist in me argues that our religious ideals will be shaped by our economic system. In our history it is evident that our economic patterns have a greater influence on what we believe than our beliefs have on our economic patterns. I fear that the economic individualism of capitalism—its success orientation and its assumption that the poor deserve their fate because they must be lazy—will be too strong to be reshaped by our beliefs.

The optimist in me argues that the gospel of Christ will help us overcome all bondages, even the bondage of economic determinism. If we will be willing to create new forms of community, alternative economic patterns can also emerge.

The future of Mennonite churches may be bright. Memberships may rise, budgets may be high and programs in missions and evangelism may flourish. The real test for us, however, will not be in these areas. The issue will be whether we desire to be churches faithful to the witness of Christ's life and teaching as recorded in the Bible. Our challenge will be to contribute to this complex, shrinking, defensive world that which is liberating, humanizing and saving in the fullest sense of the Christian gospel. •

One of our great potentials is to demonstrate the spirit of the gospel that is intergenerational and calls forth the kind of binding community so desperately needed in a fragmented, individualistic world.

THE WAY
THE LIVING BIBLE

The Mennonite Brethren Church

J. B. Toews

The spiritual pilgrimage of the Anabaptist-Mennonite movement over 460 years records eras of spiritual decline and renewal. This applies also to the Mennonite Brethren Church. Cultural environment and exposure to 20th-century theological and institutional pluralism have affected the understanding and application of the Scriptures.

There exists a trend toward accommodation to Canadian and U.S. culture in the frame of U.S. fundamentalism. The centrality of a personal relationship to Christ, the experience of salvation in conversion, the life of discipleship and self-denial in obedience to Christ have changed in precept and expression for many people. The utilitarian ethos of U.S. evangelicalism with its emphasis on personal benefits and profit in the context of a creedal faith has for many influenced the basic understanding of redemption and Christian life. The focus has shifted from the giver to the gift. The statement of Carl F. Henry that "fundamentalism has exalted the work of the cross (as a benefit) [parentheses are mine] but has been strangely silent about the way of the cross and the demand of discipleship" describes fittingly the spiritual character of a wide circle in the Mennonite Brethren fellowship. The trend toward an "easy way to heaven" theology, expressed in a gospel of escapism adapted to the human nature of selfishness, will continue to make inroads in large segments of MB circles and lead to a gradual accommodation to popular evangelicalism.

The reaction to the above trend is an emerging emphasis on institutional Mennonitism. The precept of redemption here is a process in contrast to a conscious choice and commitment to the person of Christ as Savior and Lord. Social services and concern for peace provide the focus of mission. Evangelism, repentance, conversion and discipleship are de-emphasized. The cultural values of a people known as Mennonites replace the priorities in the relationship to the church fellowship and responsible stewardship of material possessions.

There exists a growing renewal movement. It centers in a search for a renewed identity in a relational theology, an identity where the character of the church reflects the evidence of true newness in Christ, a love for the Word of God, a life of discipleship in self-denial, a conscious interdependent fellowship and an evangelistic witness to a needy world. The call for the restitution of a New Testament church dominant in 16th-century Anabaptism and the 19th-century awakening in Russia (the birth of the MB Church in 1860) are points of reference in this concern. The expressional form of such a renewal in the context of the 20th and 21st centuries will be quite different from that of the past. The renewal, however, promises the same result in the character of being, commitment and mission, because it accepts the Scriptures in dependence on the Holy Spirit as the guide.

The evidences of renewal and the promises of Christ to build his church provide the assurance that the MB fellowship will continue to reflect the true character and purpose of a New Testament church. Where these qualifications are being lost, there will come renewal and recommitment to the essentials of a new life with a central focus on the Bible, the Christ of the cross, his redemptive provision for a lost world, the community of an interdependent church fellowship and a mission with a call for repentance and faith.

The forms in the expression of these essentials in years to come may vary. Historical events and changing cultures impose such variations. The essence of the gospel, however, is unchangeable and supercedes time and circumstances. •

Will we move more and more to an "easy way to heaven" theology, or can the renewal toward a relational theology of discipleship in self-denial and a conscious interdependent fellowship and witness to a needy world help us be true to the unchanging gospel?

Are your feet beautiful?

Jon O. Nafziger

"Stand therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and shod your feet with the equipment of the gospel of peace" (Ephesians 6:14-15).

After long centuries of running from country to country, it may not be surprising that when we stop to check how our feet are doing, they seem unsightly and possess a strong odor. The more we have run, the stronger the smell has become. And the state of our feet, their uncomfortably noticeable condition, has become a feature which we would prefer to have our neighbors forget. However, with some nice socks and shoes, a dash of perfumed powder and an occasional rinse in a basin, our feet begin to appear reasonably similar to everyone else's. We can then forget the journeys they have endured and the coals on which they have trod.

Granted, socks, shoes and foot powder are nice, and the ability to make them may be part of God's good creation, but they are what everyone in our society wears. Shoes are not "the equipment of the gospel." For they are quite similar to army boots, only much more comfortable. Shoes don't seem quite as out of place on Christ's body as army boots would. They seem to fit comfortably both in the world and in the church. Unfortunately, they aren't the equipment of the gospel.

God has called us to be faithful, but God hasn't promised that after we have walked along the way of Christ our feet will be pleasing to the world. The world may find the smell and sight of them offensive. They probably won't understand why we would wear the awkward and often heavy equipment of the gospel. But the goal of the church cannot be to please the world or to keep our feet comfortable on our journey. Rather, we should wear the things that God has said fit his children best.

Let's take a hard look down for a moment. Is the gospel of peace evident in our apparel? How close do we come to wearing army boots, or at least being happy that our nation's boots are kept shining? In fitting easily into American shoes, we have put the equipment of the gospel of peace in the closet. In the words of John Howard Yoder, our national survival and prosperity has "become and remained more decisive than the biblical imperatives" (*The Original Revolution*, p. 147).

". . . and having shod your feet with the equipment of the gospel of peace. . ." (Ephesians 6:15, RSV). How are your feet shod? And are they beautiful?

When we accept peacemaking as a biblical command it must take a higher precedence than what we are told is "the national interest." There's a great deal of difference between equipping our feet with the gospel and simply staying out of army boots. Being a faithful witness to peace means more than being uninvolved in war. However, many people don't like feet that aren't sprinkled with the powder of being compatible with the system. We don't fit the average ideal of what good citizens are. But we don't need to apologize to the nation for faithfully walking in the footwear that God has provided, regardless of its opinion. Many will hate and despise us for our armor, but we are answerable to God who will be faithful.

The distinctiveness of our feet, equipped for peace, will be a call to the world to follow in God's way. We may be too strong for some, but we dare not lose our peculiarity. If we accept the shoes and boots of the government and military, we end up stepping on our own toes. "For it does come to this; if religion is to sanction the order that exists it must defend that order even against criticism of the prophetic word, even at the cost of the life or the liberty of a prophet" (Yoder, p. 21).

We may be uncomfortable with prophetic words, with visible witness to God's way, with the sight and smell of feet in God's equipment of the gospel. But we dare not silence the prophetic voice which God has given to the church. We all need to take off our shoes and get used to the sight and smell of our feet. We can't compromise between army boots and the equipment of the gospel, no matter how much shoes seem to save. It's time for us to put on God's footwear.

"How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good tidings, who publishes peace. . ." (Isaiah 52:7). We should always keep in mind that we're heading for the mountains, and how beautiful our feet will be when we finally do reach Zion. Feet adorned with good tidings, perfumed by the equipment of the gospel. Our feet may sometimes seem unbecoming here and now, but they will be beautiful as we go up to the mountain of the Lord and to the house of our God.

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Snyder has been a leader

Marion Keeney Preheim

William T. Snyder's most outstanding quality is his ability to lead, particularly in times of crisis. In over 40 years of Mennonite Central Committee service, he has had many opportunities to exercise leadership.

Early in his career the Mennonite Central Committee executive committee discerned his gifts. He was serving as a drafted man at a Luray, Va., Civilian Public Service camp in 1943, helping in the camp's administration.

After only three months there, he received a letter asking him to assist in the treasurer's office in Akron, Pa. Snyder had a degree in business administration from Bluffton (Ohio) College. Subsequently he provided leadership in the CPS canning and drying program and later as director of the CPS dairy farmer and dairy tester programs.

The first big crisis he handled in the postwar period was refugee migration and resettlement. In 1945 he became director of the Mennonite Aid Section in which the U.S. and Canadian Mennonites cooperated. It eventually assisted 13,000 to 15,000 refugees from Europe to North and South America.

"While we attacked the refugee problem on an inter-Mennonite basis," Snyder says, "the General Conference provided key people and took a leading part in refugee settlement. For me the joyous thing was in helping the refugees find suitable homes and helping reestablish their economic, community and church life."

During this time Snyder had offers from the business world to leave MCC. "I stayed because of a sense of duty," he says. "I felt the call of God."

Further opportunities came his way in MCC as he assisted executive secretary Orie Miller in the 1950s. He continued refugee work, helping colonies in South America get long-term production credit and to construct the Trans Chaco Highway.

"I also felt challenged in the area of peace," he says. The 1-W program began and Mennonites wanted to support their men. Snyder helped them in such things as coordinating pastoral visits.

Snyder became MCC's executive secretary in 1958. An avid reader and world traveler, he brought to the position a breadth of knowledge in guiding MCC's relief and service operations. He continued the expansion into the Third World, taking a special interest in Africa.

While still valuing relief, the focal point of MCC's beginnings, he moved with the times when first development and then justice became watchwords. Concern for evangelism also permeated his thinking. He can outline in detail places where MCC preceded missions and church planting.

His leadership in peace and civil rights in the turbulent 1960s was crucial for MCC. About the Vietnam War he said, "Some of us felt we should speak the truth to powers by going to them. I felt going into the streets could be misconstrued. . . . At MCC we had to keep in mind we were representing all the churches."

However, Snyder allowed those with a more activist stand to participate according to their convictions. For one civil rights demonstration in Washington, MCC made local arrangements for housing and set up a discussion in a church for Mennonite participants. MCC Information Services prepared a news release on the event.

He was always conscious of MCC's inter-Mennonite makeup. He had family roots in both the General Conference and Mennonite Church and learned to know other Anabaptist groups. His leadership helped bring together North American Mennonites for MCC work. "We kept the confidence of both the conservative and the more activist people," he says.

The 1970s brought another issue that was to test Snyder's ability to roll with the times. People began raising his consciousness on women's place in MCC service. Snyder, mentored in a largely male structure, found it hard to understand women's aspirations.

But he did do some changing. He acknowledges that his two daughters' career struggles affected him. The MCC board, other executives and various women counseled him and he listened. "One matures," he says. "I have an interest in developing more positions of responsibility for women."

To take a more complete look at Snyder's leadership, one needs to note his gregarious nature. Students at Bluffton College chose him as most popular man in his senior year. Throughout his MCC career he wove a network of relationships with workers, church people and workers' children. He liked being a mentor for young people in MCC service.

Bill Snyder is known as spiritual counselor and friend by many GCs and other people around the world.

Snyder, nurtured in a GC mission church in Altoona, Pa., brought to MCC some solid leadership. He continued to attend a GC church all during his years at MCC—the Bethel Mennonite Church in Lancaster.

His wife, Lucille (Steiner) Snyder, faithfully supported his work, freeing him for service to others. Bluffton College honored his service by giving him an honorary doctorate in 1981 and by naming him alumnus of the year in 1983.

Besides his MCC work he served on the boards of Bluffton College, GC Board of Christian Service, Mennonite Economic Development Associates, Mennonite Mental Health Services and the National Interreligious Service Board of Conscientious Objectors.

Snyder may no longer be the MCC executive secretary, but his contribution to MCC and the church at large is not over.

Beatitudes for a choir

John Clayton

And, seeing the long church year before them, and knowing the awesome role that music must play in the worship services that lay ahead, the choir director called together the singers and spake to them, saying:

Blessed are the poor in spirit, those who are willing to blend their voices into a harmonious ensemble, for theirs is the music of heaven.

Blessed are the music makers, for they shall be called heralders of God.

Blessed are they that mourn when forced to miss rehearsal but call to inform the director of their anticipated absence, for in these faithful few shall the director find comfort.

Blessed are the meek, who submit themselves to following the director, for they shall merit great worth.

Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst *after* rehearsals are concluded, bringing with them neither gum nor goodies, for they shall be filled with music.

Blessed are the merciful, who take pity on the music's composer, careful to read the original notes, follow the original time and proclaim resoundingly the original message, for they shall obtain mercy from discriminating critics.

Blessed are the pure in pitch, in tone and in enunciation, for their voices shall blend in moving harmonies, enabling others to envision God.

Blessed are the musicmakers, for they shall be called heralders of God.

Blessed are ye singers when the director shall seem to persecute you for the sake of the final rendition; be patient and rejoice, for of such perfection is the music of heaven.

Blessed are ye when other choirs shall revile you and turn their ears from you and say all manner of evil against you jealously. Rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heavenly satisfaction that you have sung faithfully and well—for so disparaged they the great singers who were before you . . . perhaps even that Bethlehem choir of angel voices.

They help the lame to walk

Joy Hofer

Victims of polio—a common childhood disease in Upper Volta—and amputees are given a chance to walk again at the Djibo Hospital there. The hospital was established 11 years ago by Ken and Jocelyn Elliot, medical missionaries from Australia. It is the only Christian hospital in a predominantly Moslem region inhabited by the Fulani cattle-herding tribe.

Mennonite Central Committee worker Carl Schmidt from Beatrice, Neb., constructs and fits artificial limbs and crutches for patients there. MCC nurses Hilda Schmidt and Dorothy Hunsberger (Spring City, Pa.) work with physical therapy.

The Schmidts relate an experience with a 4-year-old polio victim, Adou Tall, who was brought in by his grandmothers. He entered the hospital without ever having walked. Dr. Elliott straightened his left leg under spinal anesthesia and applied a plaster cast. Then Carl made a brace for the other leg and a pair of crutches for the boy.

Voltaic nurses at the hospital began working with him, teaching him to walk. The process was discouraging since he showed little incentive on his own.

After the nurses almost gave up in despair, Hunsberger and Schmidt decided to concentrate on helping Adou. They soon discovered he had never done anything for himself and was so weak that he was unable to hold an object in his hands. Several times daily he was scheduled for exercises to strengthen his arms and hands. He would often cry and say he could not do the exercises required, but after two months he was able to move around his cot and walk by holding onto a bar.

When his cast was removed a month later and another brace made, he was able to walk with crutches. "He was proud of himself and spent the rest of the day walking all over the place," Hilda Schmidt writes. "Grandmother walked behind him for a short while, but she soon tired and decided he didn't need watching."

Carl Schmidt is busy in the Upper Volta workshop making leg braces and crutches.

Grace Community Church invited pastors and representatives from the 60632 zip code area (in Chicago's inner city) to meet and discuss the problems caused by the economic recession and reductions in government funding during 1982. The meeting resulted in Zone "32" Pantry and the Hunger Board. The pantry's purpose is to provide food to those in an emergency need: people in crisis situations (fire, unexpected bills); with low income, aid, pension or Social Security; and those in waiting periods, such as the 30-day waiting period for welfare or four weeks for unemployment benefits. The pantry is located in Grace Church's fellowship hall, which has an adequate storage room for the food. Many churches donate the food through food drives and individual donations. The volunteer staff do client screening and food bagging. Overseeing the program is an administrative director and coordinator. All clients and dependents are given a two-day food supply, Christian love and a referral to get further help. At present the pantry is open one day a week. As volunteers work in cooperation with the Church Federation of Greater Chicago, they may see the need to open the pantry two or three days a week. "Our prayer as we work here," says Florence Rhoades, administrative director of the pantry, "is that our clients see Christ in us as we serve them."

NEWS

CMC handles long agenda despite time bind

Winnipeg—After four days of reporting, study, worship and discussion at this year's Conference of Mennonites in Canada sessions, held here July 8-12, delegates and organizers found that they had only 2½ hours in which to make their most important decisions.

Under the gavel of chairperson Jake Fransen, the conference managed to squeeze in action on the major agenda items—the Task Force on Education recommendations, the 1984 budget, a new church building fund proposal and a resolution regarding a study of CMC church polity—but left a few other pieces of business, plus some delegates' unwritten concerns, for another day.

The compression of decision making into the last morning of the sessions came about as a result of two factors: an attempt by organizers to distance reporting and discussion time from conference action on the same matters, hopefully allowing for more careful preparation of resolutions, and the tabling by delegates of several important actions to the last day of business.

Despite frustrations on the part of some participants with the time bind, the conference body managed to survive the crunch in good shape. Aside from the continuing problem of finances, delegates were clear about their concerns for the coming year: the viability of establishing a Council of Education, some clarity between the roles of Mennonite Foundation of Canada and CMC in the administration of a new building fund for constituent churches, the continued stability of Canadian Mennonite Bible College amid the search for a new full-time president and a study of church polity within the conference.

Rod Sawatsky (right) and Gary Gerber lead a workshop on "autonomy and accountability."

Ironically, a resolution calling for the program committee to review the conference procedure which brought about the time crunch was left on the table.

Clearly the farthest-ranging action taken by delegates at the 1983 annual sessions was acceptance of the Task Force on Education's recommendations, assembled after a year of hearings and study. The first part of the report, titled "Providing Coordination of and Support for Existing CMC-Related Institutions," carried the suggestion that a Council of Education be created by the conference "for coordination of the educational efforts of the CMC constituency," complete with its own staff. While endorsing the rest of the task force's report, delegates approved this recommendation only in principle, asking the General Board to put together a proposal on how to implement such a proposal, given the fact that the CMC is currently in the midst of a program to liquidate accumulated deficits.

The theme of the conference, "Christ, our Authority," was expounded through four Bible studies and a sermon by Erland Waltner, former president of Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., and presentation of a lengthy paper by Rod J. Sawatsky, professor at Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, Ont. Response to Sawatsky's "Autonomy and Accountability: Church Polity within the Conference of Mennonites in Canada" was especially animated.

After tracing the history of Anabaptist/Mennonite church government through three distinct stages, Sawatsky concluded that the current polity of CMC might be defined as "excessive

Mennonite Christian Hospital in Hwalien, Taiwan, will celebrate Hospital Founders' Day and its 35th anniversary on Aug. 29 with special services. MCH traces its beginning to 1948, when the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan invited Mennonite Central Committee to start mobile clinics among the country's tribal people. A house was rented and used as a clinic the following year, and in 1954 a 35-bed hospital was constructed. The structure was rebuilt in 1978 and expanded, so that it now offers 150 beds.

Relatively speaking, there has been a dramatic increase in the number of people claiming no religious preference in Canada, according to James Sauer ("Religious Adherence and the 1981 Census," *The Presbyterian Record*, June 1983). Overall, Catholics kept pace with growth in the population, mainline Protestants experienced net losses, while conservative Protestant traditions experienced gains. Overall, Protestants lost adherents. This is the first time this has happened since 1921. Mennonites experienced a 13 percent increase.

Women have made far greater increases in their representation in journalism in the United States than blacks, reports Knight-Ridder News Service. The proportion of black editors and reporters declined from 6 percent in 1979 to 4.9 percent in 1981. But women held 50.2 percent of the total jobs in the field that year.

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congregationalism" and that "our congregational polity needs once again to be tempered with elements of episcopal and presbyterian polities."

A workshop on Sawatsky's proposals for regaining such a balance saw heavy attendance. By Tuesday morning, delegates had decided that the paper should be published, distributed to churches and studied by the conference's Committee on Ministerial Leadership.

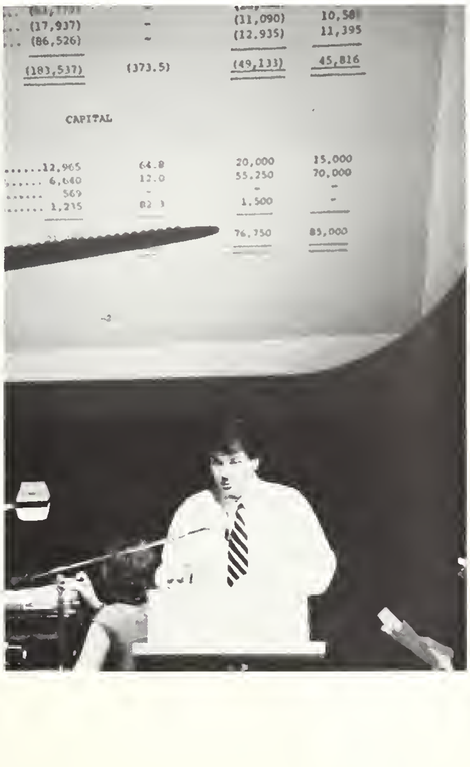
Also the subject of much hallway discussion was George K. Epp's final message to CMC as president of CMBC. During what Epp himself termed "the most difficult comments ever made to CMC," the outgoing college administrator appealed to delegates for a rethinking of the role of the church in the education of its young people—especially the breadth of its offerings—and urged the CMBC board to become more aggressive in determining the school's style and direction. Above all, Epp said, the CMC's churches need to meet their financial obligations. "Without finances, we cannot continue business as usual. . . ."

With Helmut Harder serving as interim president, the CMBC board will continue its search for a chief administrator. The college is hoping to establish a D. P. Neufeld chair in practical theology through an above-budget endowment fund of $350,000.

Native Ministries reported to the conference orally, through a slide set on Paungassi and via a drama written by Menno Wiebe titled "Main Street Priest." The latter, presented at a theater in downtown Winnipeg on Sunday evening, played to two packed houses of 200 people each. NM chairperson Walter Franz listed the board's goals as (1) to continue to affirm native leadership in their churches, (2) to affirm a listening stance toward native people, (3) to build on the dialogue already established with natives in Canada's north and (4) to continue to make resources available to congregations. "Education, land entitlement and adoption of native children will be issues for NM in the years ahead," said Franz.

Besides summarizing their program, Congregational Resources Board members formally thanked outgoing executive secretary Edward Enns for his services over the past eight years. A proposal to create a church building fund, eventually to consist of $1 million, was initially tabled after some confusion persisted about the fund's overlap with the mandate of Mennonite Foundation of Canada. On Tuesday morning, though, delegates gave assent to the idea by way of a substitute motion calling on CMC and MFC to negotiate the means of raising funds for, administering and handling applications for the project. *Larry Cornies*

Conference treasurer Edgar Rempel presents the 1984 budget to CMC delegates.



Conference highlights:

Delegates to the Conference of Mennonites in Canada annual sessions in Winnipeg, July 7-12,

- accepted the recommendations of the Task Force on Education, with the proviso that the General Board bring proposals to next year's conference on how to implement the recommendation on the creation of a Council of Education, given current fiscal restraints;
- responded enthusiastically to a paper on CMC church polity by Rod J. Sawatzky, asked for its publication and circulation among congregations and mandated the Committee on Ministerial Leadership to study the document and its application;
- approved a proposal for a new church building fund, on the condition that CMC and Mennonite Foundation of Canada negotiate concerning the precise role of each agency in the fund's implementation;
- affirmed the current goals and orientation of Native Ministries, with its cultivation of native leadership and maintenance of a "listening stance" toward native people;
- adopted the recommendation of a findings committee for the Consultation on *Umsiedler/Kirchliche* Ministries, which basically reaffirmed CMC's "present working relationship" and "present responsive stance";
- adopted an operational budget of $2.5 million for 1984, of which $1.55 million must come from CMC churches, resulting in a projected surplus for next year of nearly $46,000 to be applied to past debts;
- accepted two new congregations into membership: Guelph (Ont.) Mennonite Church and Portage Mennonite Church, Winnipeg.

First Mennonite Church in Chicago was invited by the Church Federation of Greater Chicago to prepare two half-hour worship programs for the "Heritage of Faith" series shown by Chicago's WGN-TV on its nationwide cable system. The programs ran on two consecutive Sunday mornings, July 10 and 17.

Mediation Services, Winnipeg, with financial assistance from Employment and Immigration Canada, hired four students for the summer and another for one month to establish a drama troupe "to explore, in an entertaining way, how conflict affects our lives." The troupe hopes to create an awareness that there are peaceful alternatives to resolving conflict." Bev Sawatsky, formerly with the MCC Players and now manager of Face to Face, the name of the troupe, said she sees conflict as a very real part of people's lives. Other members of the company are Rudi Dick, Megan McArton, Vern Thiessen and Greg Klymkiw.

Mennonite income and giving in the United States and Canada for 1981 are summarized in the following figures: the number of Mennonites and Brethren in Christ reporting—233,376 (U.S.), 90,039 (Canada); per capita income—$10,459 (U.S.), $11,436 (Canadian); total income—$2,440,880,000 (U.S.), $1,029,686,000 (Canadian); givings—$168,420,691 (U.S.), $71,048,334 (Canadian), which equals 6.9 percent for each. The figures are provided by John Rudy of Mennonite Mutual Aid, Goshen, Ind., and Douglas Millar of Mutual Life, Waterloo, Ont.

Dene leaders decry Stokes Point drilling by Gulf Canada

Winnipeg, (MCC Canada)—Sixty Mennonite leaders attended a special breakfast meeting to hear two Dene speakers on June 16. The Dene delegation was in Winnipeg to address the southern Canadian public on the issues surrounding Stokes Point. Stokes Point is the proposed site of a deep sea port to be built by Gulf Canada. Gulf has made application to the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs for the construction of this deep sea port in order to allow its conical drilling units to expand its off-shore drilling operations in the Beaufort Sea.

Representing the Dene Indians of the Northwest Territories were James Ross, vice president of the Dene Nation, Johnny Charlie, chief of Fort McPherson, and Letha McLaughlin, legal counsel for the Dene Nation.

"The application for this permit is particularly crucial," said the Dene spokespersons, "because the lands in question are currently under negotiation for settlement." Stokes Point is located midway between Alaska and Northwest Territories boundaries on the Arctic coastline. That area has also been withdrawn by a federal order in council in 1978 in response to the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Inquiry and the National Energy Board, which had reserved the entire northern slope of the Yukon as a wilderness area, with no industrial development permitted.

The controversy began in March when Gulf Resources Canada applied to the Department of Indian Affairs for a land-use permit at Stokes Point.

MCC Canada assisted with the staging of the two-day media event in Winnipeg as participants in Project North, to whom the request for a southern exposure was made. Project North is an interchurch body dealing with the ethics surrounding industrial development in Canada's northland.

While James Ross made a strong point for rejection of Gulf's application on the grounds that this would greatly interfere with such species as the caribou, the blue whale and migratory birds, and would be in violation of the Berger recommendation, it was Chief Johnny Charlie who made an ardent plea to the churches of southern Canada for an understanding of their style of life. He emphasized that interference with the caribou migration would result in a termination of Indian economy since the Dene people at Fort McPherson depend almost entirely on the caribou for their meat supply.

Project North first learned of the controversy surrounding Stokes Point when several of its administrative team members went to the Beaufort Sea for a fact-finding trip in the fall of 1982. Menno Wiebe, one of the members of that mission, returned to report that much of northern decision making is secretive and often excludes the very people who are affected most by northern industrialism, the native people. He and others were also negatively impressed with the military nature of the northern economic invasion. The current application for a permit to build the deep sea port is in line with that unwholesome style of northern development.

The native people of the north came south to address the churches, this time as they have done earlier, when they have found no access to southern decision-making pockets. For the Dene Indian people, northern development is a matter of justice, hence they feel right about addressing the church, whose agenda includes justice.

James Ross (right) and Johnny Charlie address Mennonite leaders in Winnipeg.

Exiled Russian pastor Georgi Vins, who has roots in the Mennonite Brethren Church, disclosed recently that one of the charges brought against him in Russia in 1974 was that he was the original author of the 23rd Psalm. Russian authorities apparently had found a handwritten copy of the psalm in his possession, verified the handwriting as his and concluded that he was the author. Vins says he tried to enlighten the court as to the identity of the true author, a King David who lived some 3,000 years ago. The court, in turn, claimed no knowledge of David and proceeded to hold Vins responsible.

"I'm a Moonie and I love it!" reads Joseph McCarty's T-shirt (right). McCarty, a Unification Church member, checks a line recently aboard a fishing boat in Gloucester, Mass., part of a large fleet in the area owned by the church group. According to officials of the organization, the vessels are used in an "ocean challenge" program which seeks to revitalize followers of Sun Myung Moon through "spiritual renewal and deep sea tuna fishing."

I'M A MOONIE AND I ♥ IT!
HOPE 7

Court upholds order denying financial aid to non-registrants

Elkhart, Ind. and Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—On June 29 the U.S. Supreme Court issued an order that allows the government to enforce a law denying federal student financial aid to men who have not registered for the military draft. The decision lifts a lower court injunction that would have prevented this law from taking effect on July 1.

At the request of the Reagan administration the nine-member Supreme Court unanimously agreed to allow the law to take effect and to hear the case in the fall. It will rule whether the law requiring registration for the military draft prior to receiving federal student financial aid is unconstitutional.

On June 20 a Minnesota judge, Donald D. Alsop, ruled that the law was unconstitutional.

In a case brought to his lower federal court by several Minnesota students, Judge Alsop agreed that the law violated students' constitutional rights to avoid self-incrimination. He also said that the law unconstitutionally imposed penalties on students for failing to register for the draft before they had been found guilty in court of violating the Selective Service Act.

Judge Alsop invoked an injunction barring the law from taking effect. The Supreme Court has now stayed this decision. The Supreme Court's final decision will likely not be handed out until a year from now.

The law had been introduced by Rep. Gerald Solomon of New York as a tool to force greater compliance with the compulsory draft registration program. By all estimates there are currently over 500,000 non-registrants. Solomon's bill passed the House of Representatives by a vote of 303 to 95.

Opposing the bill were religious communities, anti-draft groups and non-registrants. Schools have objected to being involved in enforcement of the military draft registration through an activity unrelated to educational purposes of the schools. The bill was also opposed by various educational institutions and associations because of the additional administrative burden placed on the financial aid offices to process this compliance.

All students, including women, are required to sign a statement of complicity stating they have either registered with Selective Service or, in the case of women and those men under 18, they are not required to register.

Several Mennonite students will be affected by the Court's action. The General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church Board of Congregational Ministries are each beginning to implement non-registrant student aid funds to attempt the replacement of federal student aid lost by those who in conscience are not registered.

Affected students are encouraged to contact their schools' financial aid directors or their denominational higher education offices.

Dallas Peace Center incorporates, Burkholder remains director

Dallas (DPC)—The Dallas Peace Center, which began early in 1982 as a project of the Dallas Mennonite Fellowship, is now reorganizing as an independent non-profit corporation. Representatives from other denominations will join the controlling board, along with the core group from the Mennonite church.

J. R. Burkholder has accepted the center's invitation to continue as director for a second year. He is on extended leave of absence from teaching religion and peace studies at Goshen (Ind.) College.

Both the reorganization and Burkholder's stay in Dallas are signs of the success of the center in gaining visibility and acceptance in the ecumenical community. Support from Mennonite church agencies and individuals will now be supplemented by contributions from local groups. A Disciples of Christ congregation has already committed a regular amount to the peace center budget.

The peace center exists to give concrete expression to the biblical vision of *shalom* through projects of education, research and action. Highlights of the first year's activity include lectures and workshops at churches and schools, volunteer work in dispute mediation and extensive organizational interaction with peace and justice groups in the Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex.

Mennonites in Dallas also provide counseling and aid to Central American refugees through *Casa America Libre*, which is funded largely by Mennonite Central Committee and staffed by Mennonite Voluntary Service personnel. Ernst Harder, pastor of Dallas Mennonite Fellowship, has been investigating other possible peacemaking activities in the Spanish-speaking population.

J. R. Burkholder was the main speaker at a city-wide worship service on Peace Sabbath, May 29, substituting for Jim Wallis of *Sojourners*, who was unable to keep his scheduled commitment. Burkholder has also been invited to speak on television panels and at various interchurch meetings.

The peace center hopes to expand its efforts in 1983-84, with plans for an office and library facility.

Family Music Camp '83 will be held Aug. 21-27 at Columbia Bible Camp near Lindell Beach, B.C. The theme of this year's camp is "The Life of St. Paul," with special sessions in music and drama. Music will be taken from Mendelssohn's oratorio *St. Paul*, extracting the choruses. Music resource people will include Columbia Bible Institute music faculty, and Bill and Irmgard Baerg from Mennonite Brethren Bible College, Winnipeg.

A Bible Lands study/travel opportunity is being made available to pastors and lay leaders of General Conference congregations. The nine-day trip with the theme "Jesus, His Life, His Time, His Land, His Hebrew Faith" is sponsored by Educational Opportunities, Inc., for clergy and laity. It is being offered to GC churches through the conference's Ministerial Leadership Services office. Jacob Friesen is its director. The venture is authorized by the committee on the ministry of the General Conference. Interested people should contact Friesen at Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.

Members of Olivet Mennonite Church, Clearbrook, B.C., on May 30 voted 75 percent in favor of a letter calling on Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau to help curb the arms race between superpowers. "Our congregation of 340 members expresses its deep concern for Canada and the world in the relentless nuclear escalation of so many nations," wrote congregational chairman Walter Paetkau. "We continue to pray for our government and to urge a more serious consideration of finding new solutions to peace. . . ."

'Family feeling' pervades Pacific District Conference

Conference speaker David Schroeder (left) and president Al Heer share a light moment.

Sumas, Wash.—"Let's not make money the number-one emphasis of our idea of stewardship," said Al Heer, Pacific District Conference president, in his opening address at PDC's annual conference held here June 16-19.

Heer said the word "stewardship" needed a simple, layperson's definition. One of the strengths Heer brings to his district is his lay status, a rarity among conference presidents.

"Stewardship consists of a special relationship between believers and their God," he said. "It is not only a matter of giving, but also involves receiving. All we receive is from God. Only as He opens up his hand to give to us can we give to others. Only as we open up to receive the gifts of God will we have the joy of giving to others."

Heer will continue as president, finishing out his present term. Both his leadership and the way other lay people and ministers relate to each other makes for a family feeling at PDC gatherings. They are not exclusive, however. Conferees reach out and include others who come to their meetings, making for a friendly atmosphere.

This same kind of inclusiveness comes through in the number of new churches in their district. People of Chinese, Spanish and other backgrounds have been evangelized and the resulting churches taken into the district. This year the Prescott (Ariz.) Mennonite Church was accepted, making a total of eight new churches joining in the past three years.

Helping to support these new churches stretched the PDC budget to the limit. The conference decided for next year to keep the total budget at the same figure, $134,295.

Exciting things are happening in both the new and older churches. All the churches represented at the meetings reported in segments called "kingdom happenings."

For example, Fran Moore from the host church in Glendale dramatically described her conversion. Adam Liu of Santa Clara, Calif., told about his Chinese refugee Christians giving school kits for Cambodian children. Cleaning up their church building and making a playground in a vacant lot was reported by John Melendrez of Santa Fe Springs, Calif.

In contrast to the churches' reporting, the business meetings were more subdued. No single issue caused heated debate. However, a motion on a ministers' life insurance plan, which had been tabled at last year's conference, passed easily this year. It is a group plan designed for their district.

Tying together the conference sessions was speaker David Schroeder, who helped to set the gathering's tone by his low-key manner, friendly spirit and openness to dialogue. His solid biblical scholarship teamed up with some current information from his recent trip to Israel to provide highly enlightening talks. *Marion Keeney Preheim*

Leading minister needed

Lowe Farm (Man.) Bergthaler Mennonite Church, membership of 140, is looking for a leading minister. The church is located in a predominantly Mennonite farming community.

Direct inquiries to:
Randy Schroeder
Box 55
Lowe Farm, MB R0G 1E0.

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"Women are the invisible workers of the nation," Margaret Devadason and Cynthia Peacock, Mennonite Central Committee employees in Calcutta, told participants in Ambikapur, India, at a development seminar. The two-day seminar, entitled "The Role of Women in Development," was sponsored by CHERRDA, a Mennonite development group. Thirty-eight women from 13 villages attended the seminar. Peacock and Devadason asked seminar participants to encourage women in their villages to recognize the importance of their own work, to remember their strengths and to improve their self-images.

The seventh Women in Ministry Conference will be held May 3-6, 1984, in Harrisonburg, Va. The theme will be "In the Image of God." The program committee wishes to invite interested people to submit proposals for workshops. All proposals are due Sept. 15. Anyone interested in leading a workshop should submit information to Margaret Foth, MBM, 1251 Virginia Ave., Harrisonburg, VA 22801. Include (1) the name of the workshop, (2) outline of the workshop, (3) length of workshop desired (one or two hours) and (4) a biographical sketch of workshop leader(s).

A petition urging Congress to ban all research that could alter the genes affecting human heredity has come from a broad-based coalition of 59 religious leaders—top representatives of Protestantism's mainline, charismatic and evangelical traditions, along with Catholic bishops and Jewish leaders. Their public resolution declares that "no individual, group of individuals or institutions can legitimately claim the right or authority to make decisions on behalf of the rest of the species alive today or for future generations."

Church of the Brethren acts on sanctuary, human sexuality

Baltimore (CB)—Endorsement of sanctuary for Latin American and Haitian refugees and adoption of a position paper on human sexuality dominated business sessions at the Church of the Brethren annual conference here June 28 - July 3. Among other issues covered by the 1,100-delegate body were alternative service registration, genetic engineering, war tax resistance and Nicaragua.

Sanctuary is "an appropriate Christian response to injustice being suffered by Latin American and Haitian political refugees," says the paper adopted by the conference. It instructs congregations "to employ all lawful means to protect refugees" by providing legal assistance to refugees and petitioning Congress and the U.S. State Department to grant refugee status to those fleeing political oppression. When lawful means have been exhausted, congregations are encouraged "to prayerfully consider sanctuary as a faith response to the current situation in Central America."

Though no Church of the Brethren congregations have offered sanctuary to illegal refugees, some have supported such actions by other churches, and a number of Brethren congregations are currently considering the issue.

The position paper on human sexuality identifies "love" and "covenant" as two key words related to the morality of sexual expression. After stating first that "the church holds to the teaching that sexual intercourse . . . belongs within heterosexual marriage," the paper discusses sexuality as it relates to singles, married couples and homosexuals.

Discussion centered on the section on homosexuality. That section says the church "upholds the biblical declaration that heterosexuality is the intention of God for creation," but the paper does not call homosexuality a sin. It describes three lifestyle options—celibacy, conversion to a heterosexual orientation and covenantal relationships. The third option is not acceptable to the church, said the delegates.

The paper lists several ways the church "can extend Christlike comfort and grace to homosexual and bisexual persons": welcoming all inquirers who confess Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior into the fellowship of the church; intensifying efforts to understand how genetic makeup and childhood experiences have influenced the development of sexual orientation and behavior; challenging openly the widespread fear, hatred and harassment of homosexuals; engaging in open, forthright conversations with homosexuals; advocating the right of homosexuals to jobs, housing and legal justice; stating clearly that all antisocial, sexually promiscuous acts are contrary to Christian morality; and giving strong support to people who seek to be faithful to their heterosexual marriage covenant but for whom this is difficult because of struggles with homosexuality.

The Church of the Brethren has long supported members who conscientiously object to the payment of war taxes. Some members wish to refuse to pay taxes but are unable to because the taxes are withheld by their employers. The delegates approved a paper that gives guidance to church institutions whose employees request, for reason of conscience, that their taxes not be withheld. The annual conference recommended that all legal possibilities be explored first but affirmed civil disobedience for both individuals and institutions when it is a matter of conscience.

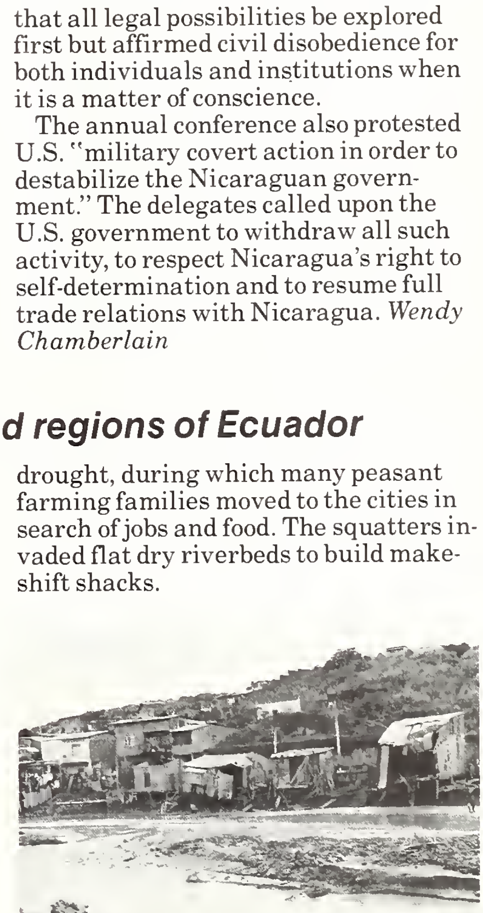
The annual conference also protested U.S. "military covert action in order to destabilize the Nicaraguan government." The delegates called upon the U.S. government to withdraw all such activity, to respect Nicaragua's right to self-determination and to resume full trade relations with Nicaragua. *Wendy Chamberlain*

Rebuilding begins in flooded regions of Ecuador

Manta, Ecuador (MCC)—An unseasonably long rainy season here has swollen rivers and washed numerous houses away. Rosedale Mennonite Mission Board in cooperation with Mennonite Central Committee has begun a rebuilding project for families who lost their homes to the raging rivers.

The budget for the project, which will provide building materials for the construction of 150 homes in the Manabi province, is $160,000. The money will come from MCC contingency funds, from the Rosedale mission board and from the Canadian International Development Agency. The Ecuadoran government donated land for the new homes.

The floods follow a seven-year drought, during which many peasant farming families moved to the cities in search of jobs and food. The squatters invaded flat dry riverbeds to build makeshift shacks.



Giving to General Conference causes through the first four months of fiscal 1983 (February 1983-January 1984) was slightly ahead of receipts for the same period a year ago. In total, 18.4 percent of the conference's $5.1 million budget had been received by May 31. However, if the current rate of giving continues, the conference will again fall short of its anticipated income, as it did last year.

The rain that falls during the May to July rainy season runs quickly off the bare hills of Haiti, carrying away tons of topsoil. Then the long, hot months follow, and there seems to be less and less food to feed all the hungry mouths. Mennonite Central Committee is providing trees, which provide needed land cover to hold tons of dirt on the steep hillsides during the pounding tropical rains. MCC workers Larry Kurtz of Salem, Ohio, and Jon Nofziger of Archbold, Ohio, distribute the trees, and they are setting up a major tree nursery that will supply an estimated 150,000 seedlings for 1984.

Forty-two black, Hispanic and native American college students were selected to participate in Mennonite Central Committee U.S.'s Urban Community Development Summer Service program this year. This is the second year that MCC U.S. has worked with minority communities to offer this program for college-age youth. Last year 25 participated. The program enables minority youth to work with a church or service organization in their home communities for 10 weeks of the summer. MCC U.S. and the local congregations support the participants.

Funk resigns, Krehbiels appointed as staff changes continue

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—The months of August and September will see a number of additional administrative staff changes at the General Conference's central offices in Newton.

Herta Funk, secretary for adult education for the Commission on Education, has resigned from her post effective Aug. 17. She has spent a total of 13 years with the educational work of the conference, having served as editor of two children's papers and newswriter from 1966-70, and administrator in the area of adult education and women's concerns from 1974-83.

Funk has accepted an 11-month assignment with China Educational Exchange as English teacher at Sichuan Teacher's College, Chengdu, China, beginning in September.

David Habegger, secretary for congregational life for the Commission on Home Ministries, will leave that position on Sept. 1 to take up responsibilities as program coordinator for the Western District Conference. He has served as the WDC's church planter on a half-time basis since 1976. The CHM post was also half time.

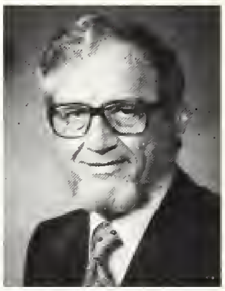
In his new position, Habegger will continue his church planting reponsibilities, plus serve as resource person for the development and implementation of programs for the evangelism, historical, life enrichment, peace and social concerns, education and tournament committees of the WDC.

Myrna and Randy Krehbiel have been appointed by COE to a joint position as secretary for family life education. They will replace *Lois and Paul Unruh*, who have directed Mennonite Marriage Encounter since 1978. The family life education position becomes an expanded one under COE's new structure and will include Mennonite Marriage Encounter, parenting concerns, intergenerational education and other related areas. The Krehbiels commenced their new responsibilities on Aug. 1. They reside in McPherson, Kan.

Myrna is a 1968 graduate of Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., and has also studied at Bluffton (Ohio) College and the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis. She has taught in grade schools in Minneapolis and Hazelcrest, Ill., and most recently has evaluated and organized educational curriculum library holdings at Bethel College.

Randy is a 1973 graduate of the University of Minnesota with a master's degree in social work. He also holds a bachelor's degree from Bethel College. Randy has held positions as a school liaison officer and therapist at Prairie View, Inc., Newton, Kan., a school social worker for the Minneapolis Public Schools and a junior high school teacher in Markham, Ill. He also served as a Pax worker in Algeria under Mennonite Central Committee.

Funk


Habegger

M. Krehbiel

R. Krehbiel

The Krehbiels have two children: Aaron, 9, and Matthew, 7. Randy will continue to be employed part time by Prairie View, Inc., Newton.

Elsie Sheriff assumed responsibilities on June 20 as assistant manager of Faith and Life Bookstore in Newton. Formerly employed by the Bethel College Library, she resides in North Newton, Kan. Sheriff manages the day-to-day operations of the store.

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"Art is a kind of necessary luxury," says John Peck in *Motif* ("Using a Minnow to Catch a Trout"). "It is about meanings and values, not survival or efficient production. It is not propaganda. It does not inform or seek to convince. . . . The artist has had an experience, a vision which is significant enough for him to want to share it." Peck, a Baptist minister in England, says the artist creates a world-within-a-world and invites the viewer in. "In art, the Christian has the means whereby the outsider can, for himself, taste something of what life under God is like. . . . He is not having ideas imposed upon him; he is left free to make the discovery. . . ."

The Holy Fools, a loosely knit fellowship of Christian clowns from some 37 denominations, will establish a formal international organization. "We want to make contact with every known clown and mime ministry. . . . There are probably 25,000 Holy Fools running around, whether or not they call themselves by that name," said Bill Peckham, a United Methodist minister who started the clown ministry "as a lark" some 10 years ago. Clowning and mime are now well-established forms of ministry and "there is a need for a more organized support system for those involved," said Peckham.

Economic sacrifice "is the essence of biblical evangelism," the head of an ecumenical ministry that provides low-cost housing for the poor told fellow Southern Baptists recently. Millard Fuller, founder of Habitat for Humanity in Americus, Ga., declared that "we have to redefine sin. The essence of sin is not loving your neighbor. There's no way you can love your neighbor as yourself when you spend everything on yourself."

RECORD

deaths

J. N. Smucker, longtime pastor, former General Conference president and editor of *The Mennonite*, died July 11 at the age of 90. Born Oct. 30, 1892, he served as pastor of Oak Grove Church, Smithville, Ohio, 1916-1935; Bethel College Church, North Newton, Kan., 1936-1942; and First Church, Bluffton, Ohio, 1942-1950. He served two terms as GC president, 1944-1950, and was editor of *The Mennonite* from 1950-1961. Funeral services were held July 16 at Eighth Street Church, Goshen, Ind. Smucker's wife, Mary Lantz Smucker, preceded him in death. He is survived by three children: Leonard Smucker of Elkhart, Ind., Mary Ann Smucker Unruh of Kansas City, Kan., and Joseph Smucker of Montreal.

ministers

David Block became pastor at Congerville (Ill.) Church Aug. 1. He served previously in Mennonite Brethren congregations.

Paul Boschman will become senior pastor of a two-member team at West Abbotsford (B.C.) Church Oct. 1. He will resign Sept. 30 as director of evangelism ministries for the Conference of Mennonites in Canada.

Rosie Epp and *Ray Reimer* will become the pastoral team at Southern Hills Church, Topeka, Kan., Sept. 1.

Dorothy Nickel Friesen has been serving as pastor intern at Rainbow Boulevard Church, Kansas City, Kan.

John Gaeddert, who is resigning as executive secretary of the Commission on Education, will become pastor at First Church, Halstead, Kan., Nov. 1.

workers

Gloria Martin Eby has been appointed the first full-time dean of students at Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, Ont., effective Aug. 1, 1984. A graduate of Goshen (Ind.) College, she is currently studying toward a Master of Divinity degree at Waterloo Lutheran Seminary.

Elda Hiebert, Zion Church, Elbing, Kan., has been reappointed for missionary service in Zaire in the public health program, specifically teaching midwifery in Nyanga. She leaves Aug. 10 for a four-year term. She served with COM/AIMM in Zaire for 11 years.

Sandra Lou Janzen, Steinbach (Man.) Church, has begun a two-year voluntary service assignment with Mennonite Central Committee at the Project RESCUE in Atlanta. Her parents are George and Elsie Janzen of Steinbach.

John and *Mary Pauls*, Bergthaler Church, Morden, Man., returned in July after serving three years as COM missionaries in Zaire. They had been involved in mechanical maintenance, which included training nationals, and nursing and literature work. Both served previously in India, John for 16 years and Mary for 22 years.

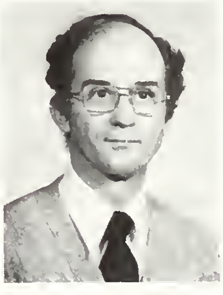
Joleen Siebert, First Church, Reedley, Calif., leaves Aug. 15 for a two-year voluntary service assignment in Taiwan under COM as an elementary teacher at the Hwalien Christian School. She is a graduate of Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., and California State University at Fresno.

Burton and *Elnore Yost* leave Aug. 15 for a six-month sabbatical assignment in Korea under COM. He will teach Old Testament at Yonsei University and work with groups of church leaders on peace and justice themes. Elnore will teach in programs related to the Shalom Mission. Burton has been professor of Bible and religion for 22 years at Bluffton (Ohio) College, and Elnore has been a special education teacher in Lima, Ohio. They served several years ago in Taiwan and India under COM.

Hiebert

Siebert

Pauls


B. Yost

E. Yost

Soviet attitudes toward peace and war

Urbane Peachey

"The time has come for people of the world to declare that we no longer accept the vocation of war between our peoples. We reject the threat made between our countries. Our weapons are like termites eating away at the timbers of our national houses."

This was part of the message of our international peace study tour to groups we met in the Soviet Union, May 6-23. We believe the frightening arsenals of opposing power blocs with their ominous verbal attacks threaten the future of the globe. We went to hear the people of the Soviet Union speak of their fears and to share ours.

The attitude of the churches. In most of our church contacts we expressed our concern over the threat of war. We sensed their anxiety over this threat. The prayer for peace was etched so clearly in their faces. We spoke through translators, but we tried to communicate our understanding through such passages as Ephesians 2. We observed that just as the Jewish and gentile worlds were brought together in Christ, likewise East and West could also be brought together. The affirmative nod was always visible in the six congregations where we spoke.

For some decades Soviet church leaders, evangelical and orthodox, have appealed in concert with the Soviet government for world peace. It has been hard for us to hear this message in the West because sometimes it appears that the Soviet government uses church efforts for its own purposes. But the hostile rhetoric of the United States also strikes fear in the hearts of the Soviet people.

Many in the West believe that Soviet churches should be more critical of their government's policies. Soviet church leaders respond in language similar to Metropolitan Filaret, who in January of this year said, "The church does not take a critical position about Soviet policy on disarmament because the church, which is part of the Soviet population, endorses the peaceful initiatives of the government."

There does appear to be a contradiction between the church's commitment to peace on the one hand and the church's commitment to defense "of the Motherland" on the other. But this position is similar to the just war theology of the church in the West. In the Soviet Union, as elsewhere, the church faces the delicate task of accommodating to the requirements of a dictatorial system.

Choir in a Moscow Baptist church

Soviet peace committee. We met members of the Soviet Peace Committee in Moscow and in Kiev and learned that the national committee has a formal membership of 450 people. However, there are over 100 local peace committees in various parts of the country, with millions of volunteers. The committee raises approximately $70 million per year from voluntary contributions from individuals, local community groups and churches.

Oleg Buyanov, secretary for the Soviet Peace Committee, told us that his committee has received a lot of American criticism that the Soviet Union does not have a "voluntary peace movement." He notes that voluntary contributions to the committee amount to $70 million annually and that there is broad support for their activities.

But, Buyanov said, there are also critics of their peace activities. There are those who say, "Look at what happened in World Wars I and II. We weren't prepared. Let's not make that mistake again. We must have a strong defense."

Tour members and our Soviet hosts asked one another, "Why are peace proposals that are put forward by our respective governments consistently discounted by each other?" The question was partially answered in discussion about our mutual fears.

One spokesperson placed responsibility on the media. She observed that "the media is very clever, twisting a news story in a way that gives a negative picture of the Soviet Union." These negative images feed our fears.

We persisted in our questions, observing that Soviet presence in Afghanistan and involvement in Angola, Ethiopia and Vietnam made it hard for people in the West to believe peaceful intentions of the Soviet Union. Likewise, we noted that it is hard for the people in the Soviet Union to believe that the American government is serious about peace given U.S. military conduct in the Persian Gulf, the Middle East, Central America and NATO plans to deploy Pershing II and cruise missiles in Europe.

We told our hosts that people of the world can no longer wait for governments to make peace; citizens of the world must create a climate of trust and goodwill displacing the forces of hate and fear.

One cannot speak of a peace movement in the Soviet Union in the same way that one speaks of a peace movement in the West. The activities of the peace committees are centrally directed and controlled. The committees are expected to abide by the policy of the Soviet government.

There is also a small but significant independent peace movement in the country which calls on all governments, including the Soviet Union, to put a complete halt to the arms race. This group calls for open exchanges between East and West. This group is not recognized by the Soviet Peace Committee or the government and needs international encouragement.

Viewed positively, the Soviet Peace Committee provides an official forum for concerned Soviet citizens to work on international peace. It is an official address to which those working for peace internationally can direct their questions about Soviet conduct and offer vision for a more secure future.

It became clear in our three-week visit that the amassing of deadly arsenals is motivated by fear and distrust. World leaders who are fearful act in face-saving passion, devoid of reason.

In an earlier era, U.S. President Roosevelt declared that "there is nothing to fear but fear itself." The message of Scripture is still more compelling: "Perfect love casts out fear."

LETTERS

Why a new hymnal?

Quoting from the second paragraph on page 154 of the March 29 issue of *The Mennonite*: "Knowing that only 92.1 percent of last year's $5,064,530 budget had come in, the nearly 200 board and commission staff and representatives came to the March 3-8 meetings expecting to tighten some belts. . . ."

Then under the Commission on Education we read, "The commission approved the exploration of a proposal on a new hymnal."

I'm asking *why* a new hymnal? I know this is not a small expense. Our hymnals are good. I wonder how many congregations use all these good hymns that we have. Then in the same issue on page 163 we find an advertisement for the large letter edition of the *Mennonite Hymnal*, and this is good. I know some people who have this large letter edition. Do we want them to have to put it on the shelf so soon?

Seems to me by using the "old" and not exploring a new hymnal would be one way to "tighten some belts."

Besides the hymnal we also have *Sing and Rejoice*, which is quite new. *Esther Lindtigen, 217 N. Lincoln, Hillsboro, KS 67063*

June 28

Let us choose life

I would like to comment on Herman Johnson's letter (June 7 issue) where he writes, " 'We Choose Life' is a good sounding motto, but applied as those 37,000 signers do, it is inconsistent, if not hypocritical." I agree with the basic truth Mr. Johnson projects. It is indeed grossly hypocritical if our only concern is for the 1.5 million unborn that are annually slaughtered in our North American hospitals and we are not concerned with the much larger moral problem connected with the whole field of promiscuity and moral values. However, as God's children we all endorse the fact that the Lord is the Creator, whether in the Garden of Eden or whether it occurs in a mother's womb.

We have the Lord's words to Jeremiah: "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you" (1:5). We also have the example in Luke 1 of John the Baptist in the sixth month of his mother's pregnancy acknowledging the presence of the Virgin Mary, who is in the first weeks of pregnancy with our Lord Jesus Christ. With that said, what do we do with the total problem, the problem of unwanted pregnancies?

It is only as all churches combine to lift up God's standard in the entertainment field, in schools, in families and in the music field that we can begin to stem the tide of godlessness we are experiencing.

Why don't we in our church help in the area of abortion by setting up counseling services as other church groups have done? *Peter M. Friesen, Box 27, Arnaud, MB R0A 0B0*

June 29

Where is intolerance?

I appreciated Dennis Webber's article (April 12 issue) and Herbert Dalke's letter (July 5 issue) and want to comment further on their concerns.

I too feel more strongly committed to the peace position and against all forms of militarism now than ever. The futility of violence is becoming ever more apparent, and the non-violent way of Christ's redemption is so beautifully relevant—and sorely needed—today.

This being so, I'm puzzled by a couple of concerns raised: (1) ". . . overemphasis on peace and a neglect of evangelism." Where is that happening? Is not the message that God's relation to us and God's will for us is love what the good news is? Mennonites are being looked to by other denominations for guidance in peacemaking and peace evangelism. We need to be in touch these days with others on the "peace bandwagon," whatever their background or creed. The way of peace is a tremendous ecumenical and evangelical opportunity.

2. I regret the experience of "intolerance or disdain for divergent views" in our conference. We need to be freed from such attitudes wherever they appear. I'm puzzled again as to where in our conference this intolerance or disdain lies. My contact with those working on conference tasks—including peace and justice—reveals a profound sensitivity to divergent views in the conference and continued deep concern for understanding each other and working together to spread the gospel. Is that openness and good faith shared by those critical of conference actions?

Let us work together at the great task of building God's kingdom of redemption and non-violence on an unredeemed and violent planet. *Eldon Epp, 1847½ S. Ninth, #13, Salina, KS 67401*

July 7

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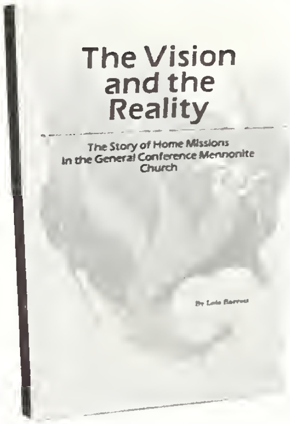

The Vision and the Reality

The Story of Home Missions in the General Conference Mennonite Church

The Vision and the Reality

The Story of Home Missions in the General Conference Mennonite Church

by Lois Barrett

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This congregation reached out

Mary Kerbs

November in Kansas: cool weather, blustery winds and the welcome promise of families together at Thanksgiving and Christmas. In Goessel, Kan., November 1981 brought not only a change in weather and the anticipation of religious celebrations; it also saw a new family move into the Mennonite community of less than 500, an event sure to spark interest in such a close-knit town.

But when this family moved to Goessel, the occasion created both interest and concern. For something was not quite right; in fact, something was very wrong, as the pastor of the Goessel Mennonite Church, Darrell Ediger, soon discovered.

When Ediger paid a visit to the family, he found serious needs and problems: (1) substantial hospital and clinic debts, dating from 1980, (2) shaky family background, (3) no cash, no insurance and, as far as the pastor could discern, no friends.

The situation was destructively self-perpetuating. Unless some immediate action was taken, the problems could only get worse. What follows is a chronicling of the tremendous response of the congregation.

First, a Sunday school class, known for its desire to do help projects, organized a church effort to bring the family three weeks' worth of food, some cash and, later in December, Christmas gifts for the family's two children. Following this overture, one of the church's fellowship groups invited them to attend their meetings and to consider joining the church family.

To assist in the third step of the newcomers' spiritual and financial recovery, the congregation sought outside support through Harold D. Thieszen.

Harold, a Hesston (Kan.)-based Mennonite Mutual Aid area representative, suggested ways for the congregation to participate in MMA's premium sharing fund (under the broader Mutual Aid Sharing Fund), a program in which the congregation and MMA share with the members in the cost of the Medical Expense Sharing Plan premium. Not surprising in this case, the congregation's deacon fund picked up two-thirds, MMA one-third. Thus, after Harold's action, the family was protected from any additional medical expenses they might incur.

Additionally in 1982, the congregation appointed a church member to act as a financial administrator to assist the family in reducing their staggering debts by setting up an operating budget and a bookkeeping system, plus a list of all past debts.

Equally important in helping the family reduce past-due notes, the administrator charted steps toward a long-term goal of financial stewardship through responsible handling of their monthly earnings. The husband found regular custodial and maintenance work at a nearby retirement home.

But the large hospital and clinic bills remained, a constant reminder that at any time bankruptcy proceedings could be brought against what little the family possessed. Again, representative Thieszen confronted the challenge head-on.

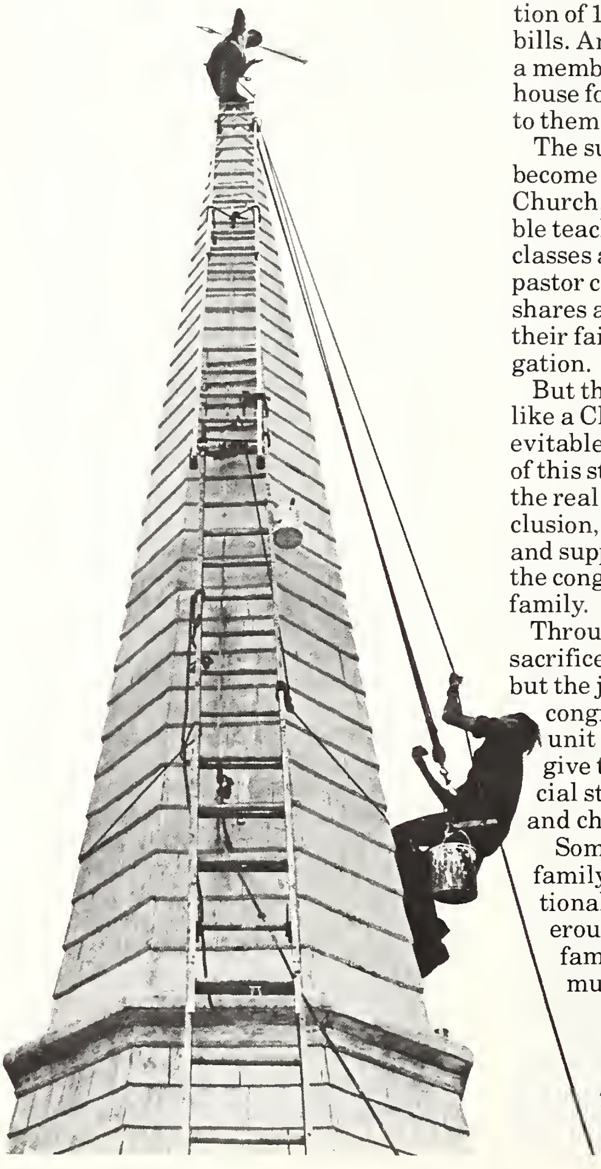
Through his initiative, in the summer of 1982 the congregation received a $4,000 Emergency Aid Grant from one of MMA's Mutual Aid Sharing Fund programs. Using the assistance from MMA, contributions from two Sunday school classes and solid congregational backing, the family paid a substantial portion of 1980 to 1982 hospital and clinic bills. And to help them remain solvent, a member of the congregation bought a house for the specific purpose of renting to them at a nominal monthly charge.

The summer of 1982 saw the family become members of Goessel Mennonite Church, where the husband's gift of Bible teaching was put to use in several classes and fellowship groups. Their pastor commented that the family shares an "enthusiasm and aliveness in their faith" with the rest of the congregation.

But the story does not end here. Unlike a Charles Dickens novel with its inevitable happy ending, the final chapter of this story has not been penned. For the real drama is based not on the conclusion, but on the process—on the love and support, the caring and sharing that the congregation willingly gave the family.

Through both personal and financial sacrifices, never expecting any reward but the joy of serving the Lord, the congregation worked as a cohesive unit and through individual efforts to give the family new hopes for financial stability, spiritual development and church involvement.

Some problems remain, but the family now has a bedrock of congregational support to build upon. A generous church family welcomed this family into their spiritual community.



The church exists to lift people up and draw them closer to God.

A life of dedicated service

Kathryn and Aron Jantzen

Lorraine Marie Schroeder, Mennonite missionary to India from 1952 to 1975, died of a heart attack on Feb. 1 at her apartment in Whittier, Calif. She is survived by her brother and three sisters and their spouses, Jerrold and Bobbie Schroeder, Vivian and Fred Kuemerle, Imogene and Leonard Booker and Marcia and Gordon Yaeger, all of California. Eleven nieces and nephews, and 11 "grands" will miss their aunt.

Daughter of David and Marie Schroeder, Lorraine was born at Mountain Lake, Minn., on Dec. 4, 1918. Graduating as valedictorian of her high school class, she took teacher's training at Bethel College (North Newton, Kan.) and taught in Kansas and Nebraska before following her parents to Los Angeles in 1944.

From First Mennonite, Mountain Lake, Lorraine transferred her membership to Immanuel Mennonite Church in Downey, Calif., where she retained active membership the rest of her life.

From 1952 to 1963 Lorraine, under the auspices of the General Conference, taught grade one at Woodstock, an international school in northern India. Especially gifted to teach children to read, Lorraine's love for them evoked immediate response as she told them of Jesus Christ.

In 1952 Lorraine first trudged up the foothills of the Himalayan Mountains to Woodstock School. For 11 years this became not only her place of work but her home and place of service. Lorraine loved her first graders. She received them when they were in boarding for the first time, separated from parents for the first time—most of the parents being missionaries from all parts of India—and she showered them with love and attention. She created the climate which laid the foundation for good reading and a good education. Many young adults today call her blessed. Lorraine's concern—along with good education—was the spiritual welfare of the children.

Many parents also call Lorraine blessed. It was a comfort for them to know that Lorraine was up in the hills where their children were, taking a special interest in them.

Lorraine returned to the United States in 1963 for an extended furlough. In 1968 she was appointed grade one teacher at Beacon School, which is a General Conference English medium school in Korba, Madhya Pradesh, India. Being the only non-Indian on the faculty of 15, she faced the problem of identification with her fellow teachers and students. It was difficult for her to adjust from the U.S. system of education to the Indian system based on examinations, homework and discipline. Lorraine learned to know each teacher and developed special relationships. Language was an obstacle. Some of her little ones knew no English, and she knew little Hindi. Most of the students in Beacon School came from a non-Christian background, but Lorraine was faithful in teaching spiritual values.

Lorraine Schroeder

Books were a vital part of her life. One could not talk with her long before she would be referring to something she had read or suggesting some article or book for the visitor to read. Spiritual nurture was a part of her life and service. Lorraine set up a library with a cataloging system in Beacon School. Her small apartment was cluttered with books.

Lorraine's energy knew no bounds; she was busy, busy, busy. Her hands were rarely idle.

Lorraine lived a committed and consecrated Christian life. She saw the good in others and overlooked their faults. She sought to understand people and interpret their actions. In a land known for its poverty, she gave generously to the poor and to those who suffered injustices.

During one extended furlough, Lorraine helped take care of her aging parents, taught in public school and completed requirements toward a master's degree at the University of Southern California in Los Angeles.

In the mid-1970s Lorraine was again appointed to teach grade one at Woodstock. Three months later she suffered a heart attack. While on vacation in 1975 at Kabul, Afghanistan, she had a severe coronary arrest. Receiving the best medical care, she was eventually able to travel to the United States under escort of former co-worker Joe Duerksen, an anesthesiologist and specialist in heart emergencies, returning from northern India.

Living with family members for some months, Lorraine recovered sufficiently to move into her own apartment. Instead of teaching in school, she tutored children in their homes, maintained the church library, directed Vacation Bible School, carried on an aggressive visitation program in the area and transported children to and from Sunday school and church services.

The subject of high risk coronary surgery was discussed with her doctor a number of times, but Lorraine was hesitant to make this final decision for a triple bypass. She trusted her Lord to the end. While friends waited for her at the Tuesday Bible class, the Lord opened heaven's glorious door and personally ushered Lorraine into his presence.

Friends from far and near filled Immanuel Church for the memorial service on Sunday afternoon, Feb. 6, with her pastor, Fred Buckels, in charge. Reading a brief obituary, her brother Jerry added that even as children, Lorraine and he had talked of becoming missionaries, but "only Lorraine made it."

Pastor Buckels concluded the service with appropriate expressions of appreciation for Lorraine's dedicated and varied services, challenging any unsaved to give their hearts to the Lord and her many friends to follow Lorraine's example in more faithful service.

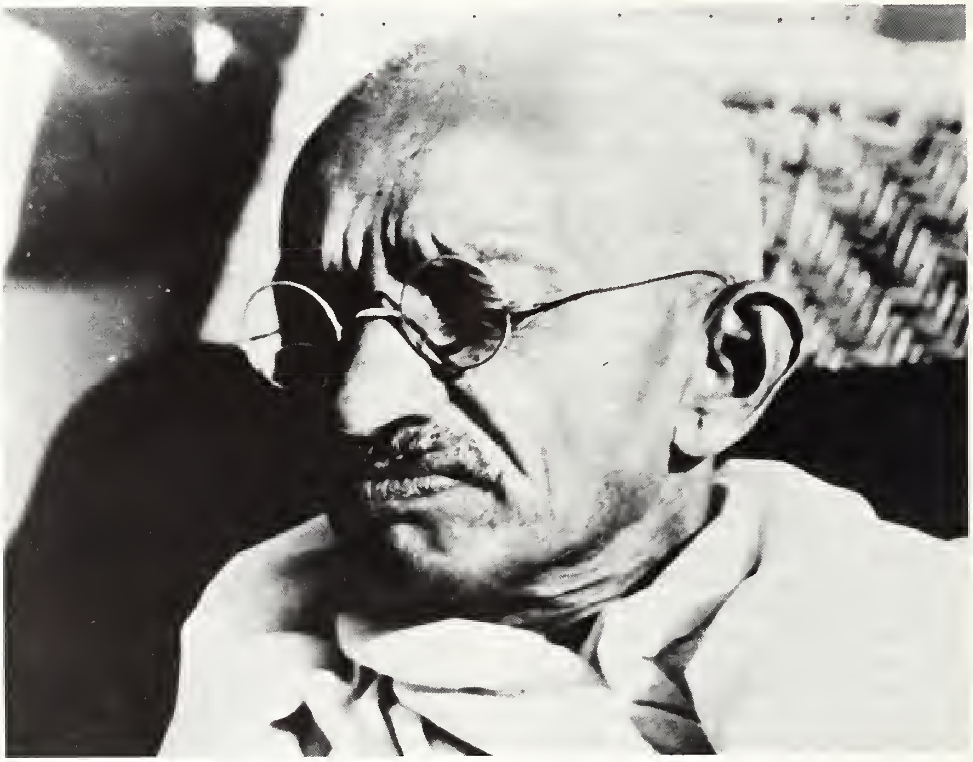
At the request of the family members, a Lorraine Schroeder Memorial Fund was set up for work in India under the Commission on Overseas Mission, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.

We can learn from Gandhi

Weyburn Groff

The remarkable film *Gandhi* has been acclaimed by viewers and reviewers. Accolades have been showered upon it by the film industry. It deserves ongoing attention.

The film offers an honest portrayal of a remarkable man whose religious and political convictions challenge the world afresh. In a particular historical context, in the face of overwhelming odds, this physically slight man—tenaciously committed to truth and justice—moved millions and challenged "principalities and powers." In the film, as in life, his straightforward simplicity confounded politicians but captured the imagination of the masses as well as reflective humanitarians.



Christians cannot help but make comparisons between him and Jesus as represented in the Gospels: the concern for the powerless and the voiceless, the challenge to exploitative power, the identification with the peasants and the poor, the devotion to a way of love and non-violence. Gandhi paid high tribute to Jesus and his teaching and found, according to his own testimony, much confirmation for his insights and practice, but he could not claim him as his sole authority or personal Lord. He claimed to have found in his understanding of the Hindu tradition all he needed in order to give direction to his religion and his political actions.

His breadth of religious tolerance is strongly reflected in the film. And he called people of all religious persuasions to pursue truth to its ultimate source. There, he said, they would find that God was one and that God was love. He preferred to say, "Love is God."

Whatever one's religious persuasion, the message of the film, and particularly the well-selected responses of Gandhi, must challenge all thinking people to thoughts of justice and peace. Profound dignity of spirit moved to center stage in India during the movement for independence. The film and the man call attention to the need for comparable leadership for reconciliation and reconstruction in our violence-ridden world today. The injustice, mistrust and oppression—in overt and covert dimensions—call for more creative modes of resolution than the escalation of arsenals for obliteration.

Political realists say that Gandhi addressed a particular world power that responded uniquely and that we could not expect that to be repeated in every international conflict situation. They are right. Yet in the face of the history of violence, would not non-violent alternatives be more worthy of the intelligence and dignity of the human family?

People who have been impressed with the film and with the man whose life and teaching have been brought to the world's attention again must acquaint themselves with the non-violent ways to bring peace and reconciliation. Gandhi perceived at the heart of the universe a God whose way was love. That God has been made known to *us* through Jesus Christ. Peace by peaceful means is God's will.

Personally, to see this film was to recall the ordeal of the partition of India and Pakistan (1947-48) in our early years in India. Daily the news brought accounts of the atrocities that accompanied the birth of the two nations. Old hatreds and new anxieties generated mistrust and communal rioting. In the midst of that came the announcement of the assassination of Gandhi in January 1948. Over the radio in our remote rural home came the voice of Prime Minister Nehru embodying the grief of a shocked nation, saying, "Our light has gone out." From those days to the present I have had a profound respect for Gandhi. And now to see this film, so ably presenting his life and thought to the larger world, is indeed an occasion for deep gratitude.

Revelation

Susan Jones

Has God revealed
Amid the tears
A way to tread
A path to follow?
At times I felt
No way was there
At all.
I was not sure,
And I did fall.
God picked me up,
I held him fast,
And now I see the
Sun
At last.

MEDITATION

The stars are celebrating

Galaxy of pilgrims:
by air
by sea
by land
  by car
  by plane
  by train
  by bus
to speak
to sing
to dance
to play
to teach
to learn
to weep and laugh
  to eat
  to drink
  to wake and sleep
  to sit and sit and sit
to feast
to fast
to remember
to experience
to plan

Bethlehem (Pennsylvania)—pregnant with hope for
brotherly love:
black
white
male
female
old and young
Indian
Hispanic
Chinese
Japanese and us and us and us.
Many bright lights:
in Pontiacs, Buicks, Chryslers, Toyotas and bikes
in jeans, T-shirts, burmudas and three-piece suits
from hovels
from trailers
from ghettos
from mansions and castles
  to stables
  to mangers
  to sheep, oxen—and all: in search of the light
Merry Christmas to all and to all a great light,
To outshine the darkness of this very dark night.

Please, God, send Messiah to Bethlehem, August 1-7 (that's Bethlehem, not Pittsburgh). We'll wait for you there with gold, incense, bread and wine—"Hosanna in the highest!"

Oliver Heppner

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Most of us have 20/20 *hindsight*. When looking ahead, we see "through a glass dimly." Mennonites have not put a high priority on predicting the future.

Meetinghouse—the inter-Mennonite editors' group—asked several people to predict or at least look at the Mennonite future. Hopefully these articles help all of us to think and pray more about what may lie ahead.

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EDITORIAL

The dilemma is painful

Our staff devotions were on Romans 13:1-7. The leader reminded us that contextualization does not weaken Paul's challenge. Government is of God and to resist government is to resist God.

Paul wrote these words to Christians when political conditions in Rome were totally unfavorable to Christians. "And somehow," said our fellow staffer, "we must face this text and deal sincerely with it. What does it mean for us here in Canada? What does it mean for believers in the Soviet Union?"

We all sat in silence. This troubling text is God's Word. None of us had a ready response.

I sat there doubly troubled.

That morning, prior to our staff meeting, I had attended a special press conference arranged by MCC Canada's Native Concerns office.

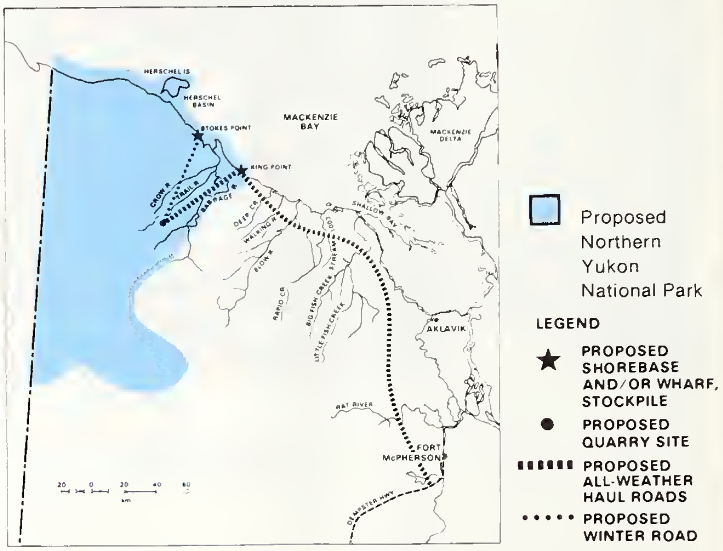
At the head table were James Ross, vice president of the Dene Nation, Chief Johnnie Charlie of Fort MacPherson and attorney Letha MacLachlan of Whitehorse in the Yukon. They had come to Winnipeg on behalf of the Dene Indian Nation—about 15,000 people living in the Yukon Territory of northern Canada.

In 1970 great interest in Canada's north was generated by discovery of oil and gas. Debate and research stopped the gigantic pipeline plans which had been made by a giant oil conglomerate. A special inquiry led by Justice Berger resulted—in 1978—in an Order-in-Council (effectually a law) to set aside 15,000 square miles of the northern Yukon from new development. This was done to preserve the major natural habitats for caribou calving, bird nesting and white whale spawning, and to leave intact both human and natural environments.

In ensuing years the government of Canada together with the Committee for Original Peoples' Entitlement worked hard to make the North Slope into a national wilderness park.

When Gulf Oil announced a pending application to drill for oil at Stokes Point in 1982, there was bemusement even from some sister oil companies.

The scenario is not totally clean. During these years there have been land-settlement negotiations between the Canadian government and the natives of the north. These have not always been pleasant.


HERSCHEL IS
HERSCHEL BASIN
MACKENZIE BAY
MACKENZIE DELTA
STOKES POINT
KING POINT
CROW R
TRAIL R
BABBAGE R
DEEP CR
WALKING R
BLOW R
SHALLOW BAY
RAPID CR
BIG FISH CREEK STREAM
LITTLE FISH CREEK
AKLAVIK
RAT RIVER
FORT McPHERSON
DEMPSTER HWY
20 0 20 40 60
km
Proposed Northern Yukon National Park
LEGEND
★ PROPOSED SHOREBASE AND/OR WHARF, STOCKPILE
● PROPOSED QUARRY SITE
▮▮▮▮▮▮ PROPOSED ALL-WEATHER HAUL ROADS
••••• PROPOSED WINTER ROAD

On March 11 Gulf Canada Resources applied for a land-use permit to begin work on a marine base at Stokes Point. Normally such an application must be dealt with within 42 days.

Canada's Indian Affairs Minister, John Munro, has given the Dene Nation a cue that government action may not come till September. Outcries from environmentalists, the Yukon citizens and others aware of the earlier action may delay this even further.

The Dene leaders came to tell us at Winnipeg that they are opposed to this new possibility. However, they are on crown land and have little voice in their future. Would we help them get their story out? Would we urge our government representatives to oppose the oil development? They fear that Ottawa's readiness to hear the Gulf proposal signals that the government is not acting in good faith.

A solution won't be simple. What is progress? How important are the ways of 15,000 people?

What should we Christians do? What does Romans 13 mean for us in such a nitty-gritty dilemma?

Do we pray, pay and obey? Obey, pay and pray?

It's not an issue for discussion when you sit face to face with those whose lives will be irreversibly affected. It becomes a matter for decision. How do you decide in such a painful dilemma? *Bernie Wiebe*

THE MENNONITE

OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST

98:17 AUGUST 16, 1983

BACK TO SCHOOL

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

The college-related church

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Do you have a Student Aid Plan?

Education and the international dimension

John A. Esau

The college-related chu

We have been reminded time and again in recent years that our futures as church and as college are linked in a common destiny. Without the church, the church-related college has no future. Without the college, the church faces a future greatly diminished in wisdom and resources. It may be no exaggeration to say, Without the college, the church has no future—though I sometimes wonder if that may be an idolatry of education.

These are words weighted with apprehension, but they could also be taken as words to describe the possibilities present when church and college live in the context of creative cooperation and challenge.

My title is deliberate—a reversal of the often repeated phrase "the church-related college." As long as the description is only from that side it suggests that the relationship between church and college is dependent upon the choice of the college. It may be the choice of history or the choice made today with an eye toward survival, but in either case it is dependent upon the college to maintain the relationship to the church.

That is far from a healthy relationship. Equally important is the decision and commitment of the church as to how we will continue to relate to the issues of education and learning.

Responsibilities of church to college. There are several traditional responsibilities which the church has had toward higher education and our so called church-related colleges. Chief among these has been to provide the resources of money and people. We must continue to assume that and to work at that diligently. Each college-related church must continue to hold before its members the challenge of Christian stewardship which will support the college financially.

Even more today the college-related church must continue to call forth students to discover faith and learning in the church-related college. Important as these responsibilities are, it is not about them I write.

Church as chaplain. A responsibility seen as one of the functions of the church on or near college campuses is the role of chaplain. While the college can go about the secular business of education, it is the task of the church to provide a religious dimension alongside of or just outside the context of the campus. At its worst, the church's role as chaplain is to pick up the shattered pieces of education and help students survive the crisis of faith which inevitably happens in the process of education.

There is an element of authenticity in the college-related church as chaplain, helping to maintain a spiritual vision and providing opportunity for faith and worship and counsel. But it is not the primary focus of a college-related church.

Church as model of faith and learning. The primary task of the college-related church is to itself be a model of faith and learning. That is not to say that education ought to be the only or even the primary task of the church. Today the tasks of the church have become almost legion. But the church that forgets learning—that downgrades intellectual growth, that ceases to challenge people to think—is a church that can no longer be an effective college-related church.

Destructive influences. There are two destructive strands of influence which greatly hinder the church in its mission and ministry in regard to education today. There is within U.S. and Canadian life, and particularly within our religious life, a persistent strand of *anti-intellectualism*. It seems to downgrade education and learning generally, seeing it either as unnecessary or even as demonic.

The late Eric Hoffer wrote an article entitled "Beware the Intellectual." He properly asks, "Can we make people compassionate by education? It is natural to assume that the well educated are more humane and compassionate than the uneducated.

But, believe it or not, the reverse seems to be true. When Gandhi was asked what it was that worried him most, he replied, 'The hardness of heart of the educated.' " Eric Hoffer correctly points out that education does not create compassion; he might have added that it does not necessarily lead to faith or even wisdom. The question of T. S. Eliot grows more poignant every day: "Where is the wisdom we have lost in knowledge, where is the knowledge we have lost in information?"

At the same time persistent anti-intellectualism is also destructive. It is a denial of creation and therefore a denial of God. It is a rejection of responsibility and stewardship. The church cannot afford the risks of the anti-intellectual mode which too often has invaded society and the church.

A second strand of undermining influence on the church has been the motif of *separation of faith and education.* While education may be accepted and approved and even pursued quite vigorously, this motif carefully avoids the mixing of education and faith. Faith is put in a box, off in the corner, outside the disciplines of intellectual and critical inquiry. It allows you to pursue some questions but not others. Ultimately it is as destructive to faith as the more pronounced anti-intellectualism. God can no more be put in the corner of the mind than God can be boxed into some narrow heaven in space. The God worthy of Christian worship fills all things, and all things reveal his glory and grace.

The college-related church, therefore, will be clear where it stands in relation to the persistent themes of anti-intellectualism and the separation of faith and learning as they manifest themselves over and over again.

ch

The primary task of the college-related church is to itself be a model of faith and learning.

That means the college-related church must stand with a firm commitment to what has been called "the intellectual love of God." It must take a positive stance toward education and learning, believing that education can be positively related to piety and morality.

From time to time I hear the criticism that worship in the Bethel College Mennonite Church is too much like the college classroom—that we are too intellectual. I am inclined to not take that as a criticism but as a compliment—however poorly deserved. I reject the notion that the church ought to be a retreat from intellectual thought—as if God could temporarily on Sunday be experienced without the best use of our minds and hearts. Those who choose a religion which sets them outside of the everyday intellectual world in which they live are choosing a religion of escape—a faith incapable of helping them face the realities of life.

Approach to the Bible. In my earlier years of development I had to deal with how to approach the Bible. There is an approach to Bible study which asks one to set aside the use of critical thought and allow the Scriptures to inspire devotion in some other way. What I began to discover was that as I allowed myself to use the best tools of intellectual inquiry available to me in approaching the Scriptures, the Bible lived; insights and meanings broke through. The Word of God spoke with a freshness and power it had never had before.

The more I experienced that the more I knew that God uses the mind to bring us to worship; it is indeed possible to love God with the mind. I'm sure those who are or have been students have had times in the classroom or in personal study where new insights came fresh and clear. Such moments of discovery are exhilarating and ought to happen more often. Such moments of learning become moments of profound worship.

Learning. F. Thomas Trotter said, "Learning becomes ideally an act of worship and joy." If that is true, and I believe with all my heart that it is, then worship can be a natural part of the classroom and learning can be an assumed part of the sanctuary. Biblically speaking, knowing and seeing are the opposite side of the coin to believing and loving.

Putting such a high value on education and learning is not to suggest that it is a means of salvation; it is not. There is no promise of special hope for the educated, even as there is no special grace for ignorance.

What God does expect of educated and uneducated alike is that we use all the resources available to us for the greater glory of the kingdom. The college-related church will therefore make clear its support of education by its own commitment to learning and discovery, believing that all learning is learning about God and God's universe.

This means for the college-related church a continued and firm support for education and particularly for higher education. It means a commitment to love God with all our minds, including the way we worship. It means committing ourselves to the best educational program within our congregations, for education is too important to be left to the colleges alone. It means a new seriousness about the importance and place of adult education in the church. It means a new commitment to biblical, theological and historical study in our churches.

The college-related church must demonstrate the seriousness of its commitment to learning by becoming a learning church, where growth happens, where discoveries are made, where values are shaped in the community of disciples and where these values are lived and put into practice.

Unhealthy dualism. We have too long tolerated an unhealthy and un-Christian dualism between church and college. We have suggested that there are two ways to truth: the church's way being the way of faith, the college's way being the way of doubt. The church begins with revelation and is deductive; the college begins with the scientific method and is inductive. We have suggested that there are really two perceptions of truth: the church's that of the soul; the college's that of the mind.

We have even implied that there are two forms of truth. The church has God's truth which is salvation; the college has human truth which is knowledge.

This dualism is undoubtedly one source of the church's anti-intellectualism as well as one source of the academe's anti-faith, both of which are irresponsible and unacceptable attitudes.

A new synthesis. We are today in a better position for a new synthesis of understanding the unity of faith and doubt—the coming together of revelation and discovery, of salvation and knowledge, of soul and mind. The college-related church has a special task to open itself to be the agent of reconciliation in this often misunderstood area.

What is now becoming clear is that faith lies at the foundation of every intellectual endeavor; indeed, knowledge without faith is no better than knowledge without love.

It is equally clear that faith without knowledge is dead, and if it is not dead it is dangerous since it leads to ignorance and bigotry. Faith and knowledge must be wed to each other.

That is not to say that the church and college must be fused. There is a proper separation between church and college as there is between church and state. It allows the give and take to go on in the most vital and helpful manner. It means that church and college, while affirming each other in a warm embrace, will never draw so near to each other that we can no longer tell them apart. We need the separation in order to provide room for criticism and correction—a mutuality which encourages growth, which develops honesty and which promotes humility.

Kenneth Boulding in a lecture several years ago said, "One of the functions of academic life is to take what everyone takes for granted and assume it isn't granted." That is a marvelous understanding of the church-related college; it also describes the college-related church.

Such a stance has its origins in the Old Testament prophets who stood as a lonely challenge to the assumed leadership and traditions of ancient Israel. Jeremiah was a prophet in a strongly nationalistic age when the national leadership called for resistance to Babylon. It was the assumed ideology of the time. It had the sanction of official theology. Everyone took it for granted. Everyone, that is, except Jeremiah.

That leadership, he said, was responsible for the scattering of God's flock; they were incompetent and evil shepherds. God would have it different. God would call forth shepherds who would care for the sheep of Israel.

In like manner Jesus came as the teaching prophet, warning us of false prophets who will lead us astray. It is so easy to assume that every religious leader who comes along can be trusted, especially if they do some mighty works and speak in the name of God. "Not every one who says to me, 'Lord, Lord' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of my father who is in heaven."

Jesus was himself the master teacher, taking what everyone took for granted and assuming it wasn't granted. It needed to be challenged, even popular religion, especially popular religion.

The college-related church must begin with a renewed commitment to its Lord. The Bible says he astounded and astonished the multitude by his teaching. Jesus as the teacher brought to those who heard a sense of excitement in learning and discovery. They learned new things about themselves. But more than that there emerged a new vision of the nature of God. His teaching had that ring of authority by which people wanted to learn, they wanted to grow. And they did.

That teacher is the one whom we name as our Lord and Savior. All our learning must begin there—with him. In the most simple yet inexhaustible words, from him we learn love, peace, joy. From him we receive wisdom—or at least the fear of the Lord which is the beginning of wisdom—and in his presence our learning culminates in worship. •

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Jesus also struggled with decisions

Brian Dyck

Decisions are an important part of our lives; we make them all the time. At this time of year, students are finalizing decisions about schools and majors and courses. These important decisions are often hard to make because they can have a profound effect on one's future.

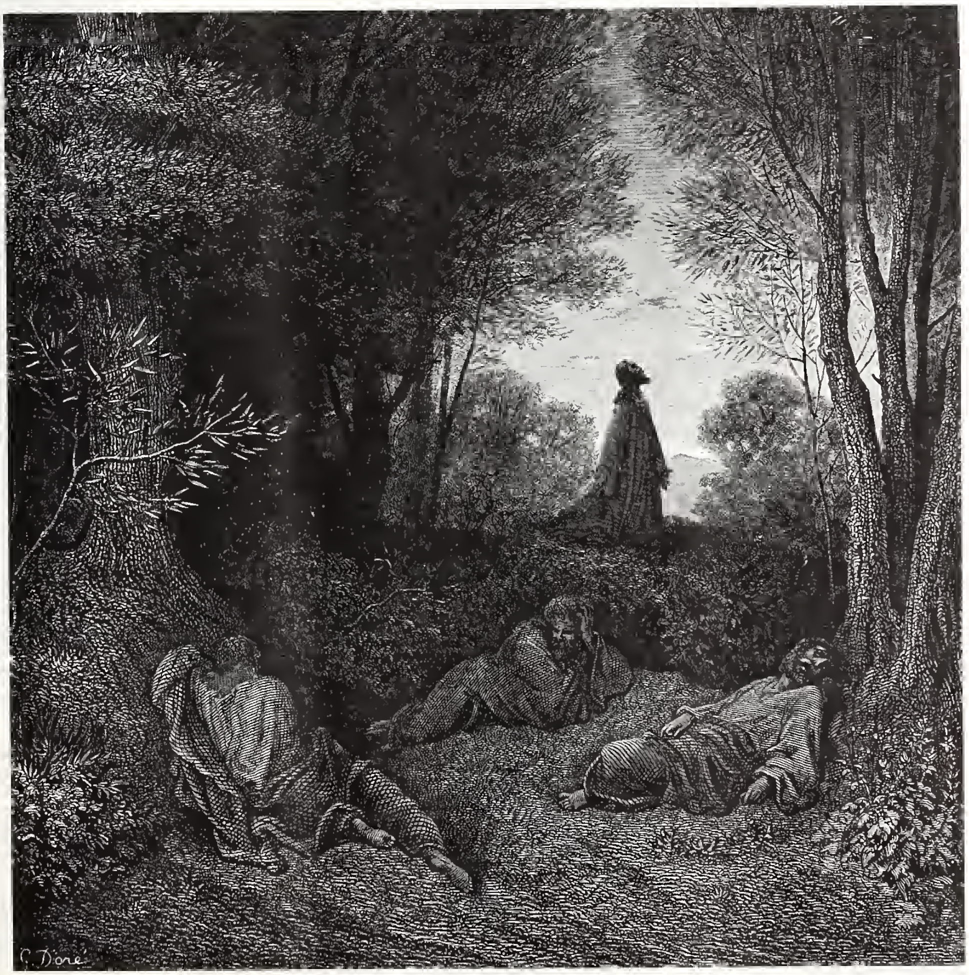
There is no one way to make decisions and we must all find ways to deal with making them. Some have left decisions to chance with hope that a cosmic force will provide the right direction for life. Some have been content to have others make decisions for them, while others have tried to make every decision by themselves.

The process of making a decision is more than outlining options, looking at the pros and cons, and acting on the most beneficial choice. As Christians we can turn to the Bible for help, but the Bible gives few specific answers to personal situations.

The Bible has many stories of people making decisions. Adam and Eve decide to disobey God. Abraham decides to move to the land of Canaan because of God's call and promise.

One of the most important decision stories in the Bible is of Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane. It is recorded in all three synoptic Gospels (Matthew 26:36-46, Mark 14:32-42 and Luke 22:39-53). Jesus' decision here makes ours shrink by comparison.

For Jesus the options were clear. He could call down legions of angels (Matthew 26:53) to hold back the crowds which he knew were coming, or he could take the road of non-violence and accept the persecution of the public. If he were to call down the legions of angels he would live on, but this would mean violating one of his central doctrines. The clear choice was to accept the persecution of the crowd.

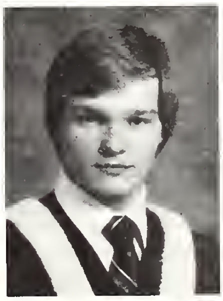


The incident in the garden teaches us two important things.

1. Jesus chose the path of non-violence because it was a way of life for him. Earlier that week, Jesus had the opportunity to bring about change through violent revolution. The Palm Sunday crowd had expected him to lead a violent overthrow of the Roman government. The cleansing of the temple would have been another opportunity to take charge of the crowds and overthrow the government. In his book *The Politics of Jesus*, John H. Yoder makes the point that this would have been the perfect time to storm the Roman fortress next door (pp. 51f.). At every opportunity, Jesus chose the path of non-violence, thus remaining true to his principles.

2. We can learn from the Gethsemane story that knowing what to do does not make the decision easy. This was a hard decision for Jesus. He was not just God playing the part of a human being; he asked his friends, the disciples, to come and pray with him. In his extreme agony he prayed, "Abba, Father, all things are possible for you; remove this cup from me; yet not what I will but what you will" (Mark 14:36). Jesus was doing a human thing here by asking if there was an easier way. The human struggle of knowing what he should do—and not wanting to do it—was a hard struggle that caused Jesus much anguish. But he accepted the cup.

Our decision may not be as important as the one Jesus made in Gethsemane, but we can apply the two lessons from this story to the decisions we make. It is important that our decisions are consistent with what we believe. And we must expect that this may not be easy. We must be willing to accept the "cup" regardless of cost.



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I chose a health-care vo

Carl N. Rutt

My journey to becoming a health professional began with parents who encouraged education which would benefit people. As the youngest of seven children, I showed little imagination by signing up for pre-med as had two older brothers, now a surgeon and a family physician.

Because my energies were split between sciences and the college newspaper, my grades suffered and I decided bravely to branch out. I informed the dean that I needed to be myself, to carve my own niche.

During my last two years at Eastern Mennonite College I completed a double major in English and natural science. Following graduation I worked at the Mennonite Publishing House and drove 40 miles to the University of Pittsburgh, studying toward a master's degree in English, which I never completed. The student deferment protected me from the draft.

I anticipated teaching college literature. But the metaphors of poetry were too ambiguous, and I yearned for the laws of physics and nature where answers seemed exact. (How do you ever pin down the meaning of a poem?)

Three months after college graduation, I was ready to apply to medical school, anticipating I might become a psychiatrist, where I imagined—or perhaps I am now imagining I imagined—I could integrate artistic and scientific truths. I wished God would just send a sign revealing the divine design for my life.

Formal training is now finished, but living and learning continues. Each person makes choices based on

ation

My journey to health care as a vocation was not along a straight road with no obstacles. But today—upon looking back and feeling where I am now—it seems like a path guided by God's Spirit.

life experiences, relationships, gifts or interests (which may not coincide with your gifts). You respond to opportunities in your path, seek them out, or even avoid them out of fear.

Visit any local bookstore and you find a deluge of health books. Some are sensible: *Second Opinion; Disabled Yes, Defeated No; Diabetes Without Fear.* Others are trendy: *Pills That Don't Work; The Woman Doctor's Guide for Women; Get Well Naturally; Low Blood Sugar and You; The Herpes Book; Dr. Dobson Answers Your Questions.* And some humorous: *Killer Salt; Anyone for Insomnia; The Great American Stomach Book.*

Imagine the consumer's confusion as everyone claims to have the truth. The U.S. sale of herbs during 1982 was estimated at $320 million. The move to home health care continues. Society's faith in established health professions wavers, as when psychiatrists get "foot in mouth" disease and report that John Hinckley "is sane"; excuse me, "insane"; and "responsible"; pardon me, "not responsible for his actions." The foot in mouth disease applicable to any profession can be listed here.

The healers are both worshiped and distrusted. Being removed from the pedestal may be desirable, but being mistrusted hurts. Years ago Marcel Proust complained, "For each ailment that doctors cure with medications they produce 10 others in healthy individuals by innoculating them with that pathogenic agent 1,000 times more virulent than all the microbes—the idea that they are ill" (*Le Cote de Guermantes, American Journal of Psychiatry*, March 1983).

During the Middle Ages (400 to 1500) hundreds of hospitals were established by Christian religious groups for victims of leprosy. Perhaps you were a barber/surgeon—you cut hair and did a few operations on the side.

Over the centuries, methods of care have changed from leeches and bloodletting. Around 8000 B.C., holes were cut in people's skulls to let out evil spirits. Acupuncture kept the Yin-Yang life forces in balance. Between the 1300s and 1600s millions died from bubonic plague; one-fourth of Europe's people died of Black Death in the mid-1300s.

How much is one life worth, or more practically, can we afford what one life is worth? How many Barney Clarks can we afford?

The widespread threat of malpractice might discourage the fainthearted. A recent annuity award to a severely retarded child (deprived of oxygen at birth) could amount to $122 million over the child's life. An award to a toxic shock syndrome victim was $10.5 million. (Maybe this is what "malice in blunderland" is all about.)

Although society has responsibility for the health of its members, the late John H. Knowles stated, "The idea of a 'right' to health should be replaced by the idea of an individual moral obligation to preserve one's own health, a public duty if you will." Our health is too important to entrust entirely to another person, or to society.

As we make our choices in the Health Ministries Supermarket, we could develop indigestion. You have to choose among 30 medical specialties, several kinds of nursing degrees, several social work paths. You decide whether you would be a pastor who dabbled in counseling or a pastoral counselor who dabbled in the ministry. An administrator who dabbled in aging—perhaps you are an aged administrator—or a physical therapist, occupational therapist, respiratory therapist, dental hygienist, and on and on. (No one feel slighted, please. A few of you "out there" might just be "people.")

Maybe you get your doctorate first and then start your practical education. Or maybe you begin your chosen field and, after reaching competence, buy your Ph.D. Those with only a bachelor's degree certainly have no business associating with real people. And so the pecking order goes.

Will your career become obsolete? Is there job security? Can you cope with the professional language in your own field, survive the initiation rites, pay your dues, obtain licensure and make sure you attend professional education seminars as long as they are led by your own discipline so that the credit is acceptable? (Does the left hand know what the right hand is doing?)

My assumption is that we choose to be Christians in health ministries, rather than people in Christian health ministries. Our ministries are not Christian because we call them Christian but only insofar as we provide them in a Christian spirit. In one-to-one ministry it is difficult enough to do justice and love mercy; I admire those who try it with groups or large programs. Professionals are perceived in society as holders of special status—both admired and envied, respected and mistrusted.

The diverse health ministries are like a body with many parts. The eye can never say to the hand, "I don't need you." Each ministry is a vital part of the whole.

Increasingly, everything is medicalized. "All kinds of problems now roll to the doctor's door," notes Leon Kass, "from sagging anatomies to suicides, from unwanted childlessness to unwanted pregnancy, from marital difficulties to learning difficulties, from genetic counseling to drug addiction, from laziness to crime." "Whatever became of sin?" asks Karl Menninger in his book by that title.

Alexander Solzhenitsyn writes, "Gradually it was disclosed to me that the line separating good and evil passes not through states, nor between classes, nor between political parties either—but right through every human heart." Robert Lifton studied Nazi doctors and found some ordinary men who were not demonic and some professionals who took pride in what they did. How far are

we from the jungle? What of the mongoloid baby who died in Indiana recently after courts refused to order the emergency surgery it needed?

Why choose health ministries? We have already learned about the joy of cooking, the joy of sex, (unfortunately for some of us, also the joy of running); perhaps the joy of health ministries can be proclaimed too. Who can conceive of a more satisfying or fuller life than being allowed or privileged to accompany people in their journeys from pain to relief, from despair to hopefulness, from guilt to forgiveness? To walk with others is to re-experience Christ's own resurrection. Without health we have nothing.

Our identities are linked to our work. Studs Terkel's popular book *Working* is crammed with quotations from interviews with workers in over 100 occupations, and these convey four aspects of work today. First, occupation influences the conception an individual holds of self and the world. Second, occupation is used as a social locator. Third, among people who do not like their work, there is a sense of frustration, a feeling of being "just a machine" or of being treated like one, and anger over the lack of autonomy and social esteem. "A monkey could do my job." Fourth, there is a remarkable tendency to cast work in terms that elevate it, that make it special and important, either as contributing to humanity or as providing a source of power and autonomy.

A grave digger: "Not anybody can be a grave digger. . . . A human body is goin' into this grave. That's why you need skill when you're gonna dig a grave."

A fireman: "I worked in a bank. You know, it's just paper. It's not real. You're lookin' at numbers, but now I can look back and say, 'I helped put out a fire. I saved somebody.' It shows something I did on this earth."

A famous psychiatrist named Sigmund F. (I shall not reveal his last name for fear his words would then be ignored) stated that the human task is "to love and to work." Kahlil Gibran (*The Prophet*) writes eloquently, "And when you work with love, you bind yourself to yourself, and to another, and to God. It is to charge all things you fashion, with a breath of your own spirit. Work is love made visible."

Most important, the healing ministries seem to be where Jesus put much of his energy, always ready to interrupt his teaching ministry to heal the sick and relieve suffering. "It is not the healthy who need a doctor but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance."

Jesus seems to link forgiveness and healing in Mark 2 and to elevate the healing ministries to a high position. He encourages us to share good news with the poor, freedom for the prisoners, recovery of sight to the blind, release for the oppressed. The mandate seems clear.

Who then ought to be choosing health ministries, and what are the basic gifts required? (These principles probably apply to most Christians as we choose vocations.)

1. *Love for others, love for ourselves and empathy.* The capacity to feel with another human being. To listen patiently since the more I talk the less I learn about my patient—my central task. So often the "admission ticket" is possession of a physical symptom which is soon forgotten as the individual pours out the soul's burden. Let's not forget that the most powerful medicine we bring is ourselves.
2. *Care for fellow people.* Frances Peabody said that "the secret of the care of the patient is in caring for the patient." Who can put a price on the worth of human touch?
3. *A desire to learn*, as well as a solid knowledge base, even a willingness to learn from those we serve without feeling threatened—a mixture of excellent technical skills and the disposition of the Samaritan.
4. *Humor*—the capacity to laugh with someone and at ourselves. Norman Cousins recommends this in his book *Anatomy of an Illness*.
5. *An awareness.* Goethe wrote, "He who wishes to do something for the world must see to it that the world does not get the better of him." A sense of confidence but a greater sense of awe.
6. *People who are more interested in persons than diseases.* Relate to others as whole persons, as complete indivisible beings. Repudiate the erroneous mind-body dualism or even the body-soul-spirit notion. Tongue in cheek I propose a "bio-pneumo-psycho-social" model. "Bio" for biology, *pneumo* for spirit, *psycho* for mind and "social" for community.
7. *People who have experienced the transcendent*—those who believe in a reality that is not accessible to the ordinary senses or consciousness. For us that is the God-to-person relationship. C. S. Lewis speaks of "acquiring a fragrance that is not our own but borrowed,

Dealing with tension. Recognize tension by listening to your body and mind. Expect some unexpected hassles. Reduce tension by saying no and learning to enjoy it. Take care of yourself. Time for yourself is not what's left over at the end of the week. Accept your own needs.

in becoming clean mirrors filled with the image of a face that is not ours." People who have found meaning in life—a reason to live. This is a place for faith—not in the infinite perfectability of humankind or in our technology.

8. *People who have tried to comprehend the problem of pain and suffering.* Paul Vitz writes that suffering may be seen as "some sort of absurdity, usually a human mistake which could have been avoided by the use of knowledge to gain control of the environment."

Rabbi Kushner writes of the mystery of suffering in *When Bad Things Happen to Good People.* Why does pain make some people bitter and others compassionate? And again from *The Prophet*: "The deeper that sorrow carves into your being, the more joy you can contain." Suffering perhaps is one way of overcoming our isolation. In suffering we are able to draw close to each other. To be effective in our work we need to anticipate the possibility and the fact of our own death with the awareness that others will go on and survive. A related truth is the paradox, "For when I am weak, then am I strong." Often patients get well when we get out of the way of their own recovery processes.

9. *And honesty.* I recall an experience in the delivery room when two babies, in their infinite wisdom, decided to be born at once. As a third-year medical student, I was learning from the OB resident how to be useful to a baby on the way out. The resident who was assisting the first mother said, "Go to it." I went to the second mother, who looked at me uncertainly and appropriately asked, "How many babies have you delivered before?" This was it. I responded, "Oh, quite a few," and went about my business—fortunately with a successful outcome. But I ask myself, how many lies does it take—even with good intentions—to become a liar?

Burnout. Burnout is a common experience in high stress vocations. We start out with high hopes but unrealistic expectations as well. We become physically robotlike in our servanthood and lose concern for people as persons. The pleasure of work becomes drudgery. We become cynical and complain more.

Behind it all is stress—which may come from external pressures or internal habits or attitudes. Stress, says Selye, is the salt and spice of life. Stress—as a healthy tension—allows us to perform work. "Freedom from stress is death."

But we don't need to be the Lone Ranger—stamping out injustice. If you feel like a Messiah, surround yourself with friends who can help you see more clearly.

What of the future? Groundhogs supposedly help predict the end of winter by whether they see their shadows. Bill Vaughan says the groundhog is like most other prophets—it makes its predictions and then disappears.

I foresee greater integration between health ministries and spiritual ministries as the limits of technology become more obvious. In our choosing let us build bridges rather than islands.

The power of the community must be tapped. How might churches do this? I am happy that the Mennonite Health Association is recommending a congregational health concerns council. The "do your own thing" fad has hopefully passed. We find ourselves as we live in relationships with others.

We need a balanced perspective on how healing change occurs. Change occurs because of our efforts (e.g. when an appendectomy leads to recovery); healing occurs in spite of our efforts (e.g. when the wrong treatment is given and the patient gets well anyway); and healing change occurs spontaneously alongside the treatment process, and what we are doing is presiding over the passage of time. Our health ministries have no monopoly on the healing process. Why and how healing comes to some and not others is mysterious.

We deal with living metaphors—of ways of expressing hope and fear, life and death, faith and of finding the meaning of life and cynicism.

How deep and profound are the natural symbols! The mystery and promise of change bursts on us from nature—the slow but undeniable progress of the turtle, the brilliant hope of the morning sun, the profound metamorphosis of the caterpillar.

Young and old must share their visions and dreams. Dr. William Mayo once said, "Take of my experience, but give me of your dreams." I dream of greater cohesion, cooperation and communication among all health ministries, of persons who transcend the tunnel vision of their own disciplines, who can entertain multiple conflicting possibilities while looking clearly ahead.

I wish for us sensitivity to the dangers of narrow professions. Henri Nouwen says that "the great danger of increasing professionalization of the different forms of healing is that they become ways of exercising power instead of offering service." The tension between excellence and the strength in weakness must be understood.

Several specific needs deserve attention. Our great society which places people successfully on the moon has not learned how to incorporate senior citizens. The elderly constitute a rich national asset. To retire in one's 60s when strength remains and wisdom abounds seems tragic for many. How often death comes to people who retire without a new responsibility to pick up—as Bear Bryant died one month after retiring.

Technology, defined as a way of doing things with objects, accounts for advances and excesses in health care. Perhaps we are doing better and feeling worse.

Jack Geiger says we have made a "Great Leap Sideways" in providing health care for the poor. "It is still the poor," he says, "who are likelier to be sick, and the sick poor who have the least chance for effective help." Although infant mortality is dropping, blacks are still at greater risk than whites. In 1950 the black rate was 64 percent higher than whites, but is now almost 100 percent higher.

Norman Cousins describes how "we are becoming a nation of pill grabbers and hypochondriacs, escalating the slightest ache into a searing ordeal."

Let's remember we are one world—a global village. UNICEF reported recently that increased use of four simple low-cost health measures could save the lives of 20,000 children a year in developing countries: (1) diarrhea management through oral rehydration therapy, (2) universal immunization of children, (3) promotion of breast feeding and (4) parent monitoring of child growth through increased use of charts.

Every day of 1982, 10,000 children died of malnutrition and infection. Surely this is a tragically needed ministry. We must develop a world consciousness with pilot programs somewhere through MCC or some other ways.

The needs are vast. We wish fair, humane policies would trickle down from the federal government. But we may need to create change in a trickle-up way—using the opportunities we have—in our own place. You in your small corner and I in mine.

Although our challenges ahead seem awesome, we must remember the saying that "a journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step." •

MCC in Uganda: searching for reconciliation

Hoima, Uganda (MCC)—After a decade of disruption and terror, peace and reconciliation will not come easily for most Ugandans. Despair and bitterness linger, caused by as many as 500,000 violent deaths during and following the reign of Idi Amin. The violence of recent history resurfaces today in the form of acute economic distress for the majority of Ugandans.

Mennonite Central Committee workers Elroy and Mary Yoder Holsopple of West Lafayette, Ind., have assisted in reconstruction in the western town of Hoima during the past year. They are two of nine MCC personnel now working in Uganda. Uganda's infrastructure is chaotic. Amid this chaos the Holsopples are working with two development projects of the Protestant Church of Uganda.

Elroy Holsopple manages the church's Bunyoro-Kitara diocese cabinet and carpentry workshop. His head carpenter's earnings—only 2,000 shillings (about eight dollars) a month—were a vivid example of Uganda's plight.

After improving the cost-pricing system, Holsopple was able to double the wages of his workers soon after his arrival last September.

"It's still not justice," he says, "but you simply have to make a start somewhere. These people are eager to work, but how can you expect them to spend their time at a job that clearly won't begin to support their basic wage needs?"

Poor wages in most government offices in Uganda result in high job absenteeism. But the workshop employees are remarkably loyal to their jobs, Holsopple says. The head carpenter, Joseph Babonenda, leaves his home each day before sunrise to commute 15 miles to work by bicycle.

The six carpenters and four assistants at the workshop, like most Ugandans, survive only because they have family plots of farmland on which they can grow their own food. Unlike many African countries, nearly all of Uganda is arable.

This fallback to subsistence agriculture is proving to be Uganda's salvation in the wake of a collapse of the once-thriving formal Ugandan economy. Amin's expulsion in 1972 of the Asian origin merchant class, which dominated the industrial and retail economy, resulted in a halt of most production and trading activity.

Hyperinflation reduced the purchasing power of the shilling to virtually nothing, but salaries remained nearly unchanged.

The carpentry workshop is an example of employment enterprises which can help increase production, enabling a restoration of a balance between wages and prices.

The workshop, now nearly self-supporting, has a healthy backlog of orders. The carpenters build furniture for local churches. They sell their cabinets, desks and chairs in the private market. Mahogany is abundant locally, and the artisans are skilled.

Originally equipped in 1980 by Church World Service, the workshop's electrical machinery stands idle during frequent power outages caused by guerrilla sabotage. Holsopple says, "It's hard to keep a strict production schedule when your electricity is off for four out of six months. But we can still accomplish an amazing amount of work by hand."

Holsopple says that building up the carpentry workshop helps bolster one of the country's promising resources, the Christian church.

One of the first East African areas to feel the effects of the late 19th- and early 20th-century mission work, Ugandan churches built an elaborate network of schools, teacher-training institutions, hospitals and development projects. However, many are only partly functional today.

The Holsopples say they hope the church will lead a spirit of reconciliation in Uganda. This will not be easy. The church is riddled with the same jealousies, tribal loyalties and power-grabbing which proved so disastrous in Uganda during the past decade.

Says Mary Holsopple, "We see our role here as working in quiet ways to encourage the church leaders with whom we have contact to constructively find new models of reconciliation for Uganda."

As a teacher at a theological training center, she says her biggest challenge is training her students to think critically.

"I tell the students to question everything I say," she notes. "Critical thinking will transcend tribalism. Deep-rooted stereotypes can begin to be broken down, and perhaps the church leadership can begin to rise above some of its own tribal-political divisions, which are seriously hindering its ability to be a leading force in the country's peace and reconciliation process," she says. *Jim Harder*

Joseph Daboneda, Hoima Carpentry's head carpenter, with MCC worker Elroy Holsopple: promoting workmanship amid a chaotic infrastructure

Transcultural seminar studies Third World concerns

Harrisonburg, Va. (MCC)—Approximately 90 college students and missions and service workers attended a transcultural seminar at Eastern Mennonite College in Harrisonburg June 17 to July 8.

Sponsored jointly by EMC, Bethel College of North Newton, Kan., Goshen (Ind.) College and Mennonite Central Committee, the annual seminar featured studies and technical studies in tropical agriculture, education, health care, nutrition and general development for people interested in overseas work.

"We learned a lot about change and about how to be realistic about it—change in the village where we work as well as our own change," said Carol Bergen of Reedley, Calif., who with her husband, Phil, will soon leave for an MCC assignment in Zimbabwe.

Among those attending the seminar were Bethel, Goshen and Eastern College students as well as workers from Mennonite and other mission boards, and 37 men and women who will soon begin overseas terms with MCC.

Participants attended interdisciplinary plenary sessions in the mornings on topics such as "Religion and Development" and "Primary Health Care as a Model for Development."

In the afternoons participants met for workshops in their fields. Evening activities included films on development and excercises simulating life in other cultures.

Leading the sessions and workshops were 26 resource persons with a wide background of cross-cultural experience in agriculture, education, health and other areas. Calvin Shenk, professor of church studies at EMC, who lived in Ethiopia for 12 years, directed the seminar.

The site for the transcultural seminar alternates between the three sponsoring colleges.

Leading minister needed

Lowe Farm (Man.) Bergthaler Mennonite Church, membership of 140, is looking for a leading minister. The church is located in a predominantly Mennonite farming community.

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The Biblical Basis for Mission. Gerald H. Anderson, Director of OMSC.

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October 11-14
Mission and Social Action: Models for Effective Witness. Ronald White, Associate Director, Princeton Seminary Center of Continuing Education.

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Evangelism: Doing Justice and Preaching Grace. Harvie M. Conn, Westminster Seminary.

November 1-4
Tomorrow's Mission: Alternative Models for Global Witness. David Young, Division of International Mission, Presbyterian Church in the U.S.

November 8-11
The Church Struggle in South Africa. John de Gruchy, University of Cape Town, South Africa.

November 15-18
Middle East Update: Witness of the Churches Ancient and Modern. Norman A. Horner, former Associate Director of OMSC.

November 28-December 2
Basic Christian Communities: Roman Catholic and Protestant Models of Grassroots Mission.* Frances O'Gorman, community worker in Brazil, and William Cook, Director of CELEP, San Jose, Costa Rica.

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That All the Earth May Know.* Seminars for theological students and missionaries, co-sponsored by 29 seminaries.

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Parents who want to eliminate commercial messages from their children's TV viewing will soon be able to do so electronically, if Action for Children's Television has its way. On June 20 the ACT filed a petition together with a California public interest law firm asking the Federal Communications Commission to require TV broadcasters and cablecasters "to insert an inaudible electronic signal at the beginning and end of all commercial advertising directed to children." This would pave the way for the development of reactive devices which parents could attach to the TV set to block out commercials during children's programming.

'War tax' dilemma continues for many U.S. taxpayers

Akron, Pa. (MCC U.S.)—"Our ancestors migrated to the United States so that they would not be forced to participate in European wars. Eventually this government respected their deeply held beliefs about peacemaking and granted them the right to register as conscientious objectors.

"Today we find ourselves in a technological age in which our money is more useful to the military than our bodies. So we are being forced by law to participate financially in the preparation for war, which violates the biblical command to love our neighbors as ourselves. When Caesar's demands conflict with God's, we cannot blindly obey our government."

These words from John S. and Sara L. Wengerd's April 14 letter to the Internal Revenue Service echo the convictions of nearly 60 individuals and families who chose to contribute to Mennonite Central Committee U.S. Peace Section in lieu of paying a portion of their income taxes that would have been used for military purposes.

For some, the contribution was a symbolic amount, such as $7.77. For others, it equaled the 36 to 54 percent of their tax dollars that would have financed military activity. That portion is commonly referred to as a "military tax" or a "war tax." In another case, a couple's taxes had already been withheld by the Internal Revenue Service, so they donated an amount equal to their military taxes, which they had already paid.

In all cases, these individuals felt that silent compliance with the tax collection process would be a violation of their consciences and religious convictions against killing and participating in war in any way. Many noted that their dilemma of conscience could be ameliorated by passage of the World Peace Tax Fund (WPTF) Act, H.R.3224.

The WPTF bill, first introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives in 1972 and most recently reintroduced on June 3, would allow conscientious objectors to specify that the military portion of their tax payments be channeled to a special trust fund to be used only for peaceful purposes. Forty-one representatives now cosponsor this legislation, but passage in the current congressional session is not expected. The bill must first win the approval of the Ways and Means Committee, and none of the bill's supporters are on this committee.

World Peace Tax Fund supporters have asked the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Civil and Constitutional Rights to hold hearings on the issue of conscience and tax payments for military purposes. These hearings would increase visibility of the dilemma faced by conscientious citizens and hopefully

Hopes for peace in Chad dashed by return of civil war

Ndjamena, Chad (MCC)—Rebel forces led by former president Goukouni and backed by Libyan troops claim they have gained control of one-third of Chad's territory. They recently captured Abéché, a strategic city located in east central Chad about 500 miles from the capital.

Government troops later regained control of Abéché, although fighting still was reported in the region (see map, right) at the end of July.

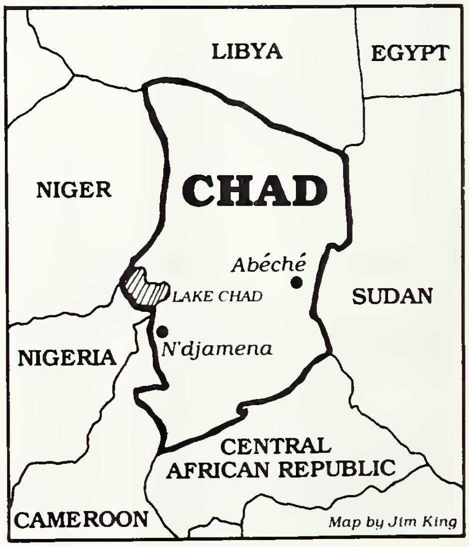
President Hissein Habré, who overthrew then President Goukouni in June 1982 with help from several Western countries, is again appealing for international help.

Mennonite Central Committee has three workers in Chad, all presently in the capital, Ndjamena. The mission group with which MCC works, the United Evangelical Mission, has one French and one Australian worker assigned to an orphanage in Abéché. MCC country representative Eric Olfert reported that the two women were staying in Abéché in spite of fierce fighting there.

Olfert requested that MCC workers scheduled to arrive in Chad in late July, not be sent into the country at that time.

Chad received independence from France in 1960 and for nearly two decades Habré, Goukouni and others have been fighting for control in this landlocked country, one of the poorest in Africa.

MCC work has focused on reconstruction, community development, relief and agriculture.



Map by Jim King

Amish Mennonite colonists in Paraguay say they continue to seek exemption from military service for believers who are Paraguayan nationals, but have been told that exemption is "for Mennonites and not for Paraguayans." Colonist Paul Hollingshead commented that "this would seem to imply that Paraguayans cannot be Mennonites in the full sense." The Amish are now forming an agricultural school, currently with four students, which could serve as an acceptable alternative to military service.

Responding to a need observed in the planning for the American Festival of Evangelism in 1981, the North American Lausanne Committee is sponsoring a National Convocation on Evangelizing Ethnic America. This meeting will be held at the South Main Baptist Church in Houston April 15-18, 1985. The convocation will focus on the 18-20 different ethnic families in the United States whose language and culture is not English. An attendance of approximately 700 is expected. The consultation theme will be "Let Ethnic America Hear His Voice."

The CBS television network has declined a challenge by the (U.S.) National Council of Churches to what it called a "public, impartial arbitration" of charges that a CBS segment on the NCC and other church agencies was unfair and inaccurate. In response to the NCC call, CBS said it would be "happy to discuss" complaints about the segment with NCC officials in private. NCC general secretary Claire Randall said that "by taking this arrogant and unyielding stand, CBS has, in effect, vindicated" the NCC.

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help gain support for the bill.

Meanwhile, the federal government is attempting to crack down on various types of tax protests. People who object to paying taxes for military purposes may face stiff penalties designed to deter those trying to evade tax collection or destroy the tax system.

The Tax Equity and Fiscal Responsibility Act of 1982 instituted an automatic $500 penalty for individuals filing "frivolous" tax returns. The penalty can apply to people who take unallowable deductions, credits or exemptions or give incomplete information on their tax returns.

Those taking "war tax" deductions or credits or claiming an excessive number of exemptions to reduce their tax liability could be subject to the new fine. Several conscientious military tax resisters have received notices from the Internal Revenue Service that the penalty has been imposed, according to the May-June issue of *Center Peace*, the news journal of the Center on Law and Pacifism.

Robert Hull, peace and justice secretary for the General Conference Mennonite Church, suggests that conscientious objectors to military taxation take steps to distinguish their non-payment of military taxes from secular tax protests and evasion schemes. If taxpayers correctly compute and report the amount owed and indicate in an attached letter that they cannot with a clear conscience pay the military-related portion, their tax returns will go directly to the Internal Revenue Service Collection Division instead of to the overloaded Audit Division.

Hull suggests that this action be accompanied with letters to legislators to communicate the religious and moral grounds for such action, and to demonstrate the need for remedial legislation such as the World Peace Tax Fund.

Bill Samuel, member of the WPTF steering committee, suggests that taxpayers write a contract on the back of their check to IRS stating that deposit of the check constitutes a legally binding agreement (contract) that the money will not be used for military purposes. Courts have held that contractual checks involving private parties are legally binding, but it is uncertain whether or not IRS would abide by the contract.

For 13 families of Mennonite-Quaker weavers from Krefeld, Germany, the desire for religious liberty led them to emigrate to America in 1983. Now, 300 years later, Mennonites, Quakers and other people of conscience strive to live in accordance with their Christian and moral convictions in a vastly different context. *Linda Schmidt*

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Mennonite Heritage is a quarterly publication of the Illinois Mennonite Historical and Genealogical Society. Its commemorative issue has been released. Single copies are available for $3.50 each, plus $1 mailing costs, and can be ordered from: *Mennonite Heritage*, 8015 Cameo Drive, Rockford, IL 61111. This year marks the 150th anniversary of the first Mennonite meeting in Illinois, which was founded at Partridge Creek, in what is now Woodford County.

The Ho Ming Freighter steamed out of Quebec City, P.Q., June 3, loaded with 8,500 tons of Mennonite Central Committee wheat destined for Mozambique. Mozambique is one of 18 African countries that are experiencing the worst food shortages in a decade. The Mozambique government estimated that the cereal deficit this year will be over 400,000 tons for the sparsely populated southeastern African country that has a population of only 12 million. The Christian Council of Mozambique, a coalition of churches, will observe the distribution.

Thirty tons of Mennonite Central Committee canned beef left Philadelphia June 24 for northern Nicaragua to assist people who have had to leave their homes because of the war between the Sandinista government and counterrevolutionary forces. It is projected that the beef shipment will supply 2,000 families with a can of beef each for 16 weeks. The beef will be distributed through CEPAD, the Evangelical Committee for Aid and Development, which represents Protestant churches in Nicaragua and the Nicaraguan Mennonite church.

Increased sales prime renewed interest in rower pump

Dacca, Bangladesh (MCC)—During the past winter over 1,000 Bangladeshi farmers bought rower pumps. This is the largest single-season sale of the pump since Mennonite Central Committee workers began selling it in 1979. These simple, inexpensive pumps enable farmers to manually irrigate their small plots of land.

"There are now more than 2,500 rower pumps in the field," reports MCC country representative Harold Harder. Harder estimates that with these pumps farmers are now producing food on over 1,250 acres of land that were previously barren during the dry, winter season. "Some of the people are even growing two crops [in fields] where there were none before," he adds.

Drawing water with the pump is so easy that even children can do it. To operate the pump, a person simply pushes and pulls directly on the T-shaped handle at the end of the piston rod. This causes the piston to move back and forth in its cylinder, drawing water out of the ground by suction.

Because the pump cylinder is inclined at a 30° angle to the ground, the operator's pushing and pulling is similar to the action of rowing a boat.

Most farmers use the pump to irrigate vegetables, potatoes, wheat, winter rice and chili peppers. A few of the pumps are also used to supply water for homesteads.

An attractive feature of the pump is its simple design. During normal operation the pump requires little maintenance, and spare parts can be replaced without tools.

Repairs when necessary are simple, because the parts are easily accessible. Both the piston and the foot valve can be removed without dismantling the pump.

Another attractive feature of the pump is its low cost. The retail cost for a 100-foot rower pump set and its installation is 1,587 takas ($67 U.S.). "For a poor farmer, that's a lot of money," notes Frank Peachey of Belleville, Pa., MCC's marketing manager for the rower pump. The average annual per capita income in Bangladesh is $85 U.S. But prices of comparable pumps available in the country are 2,000 takas and higher.

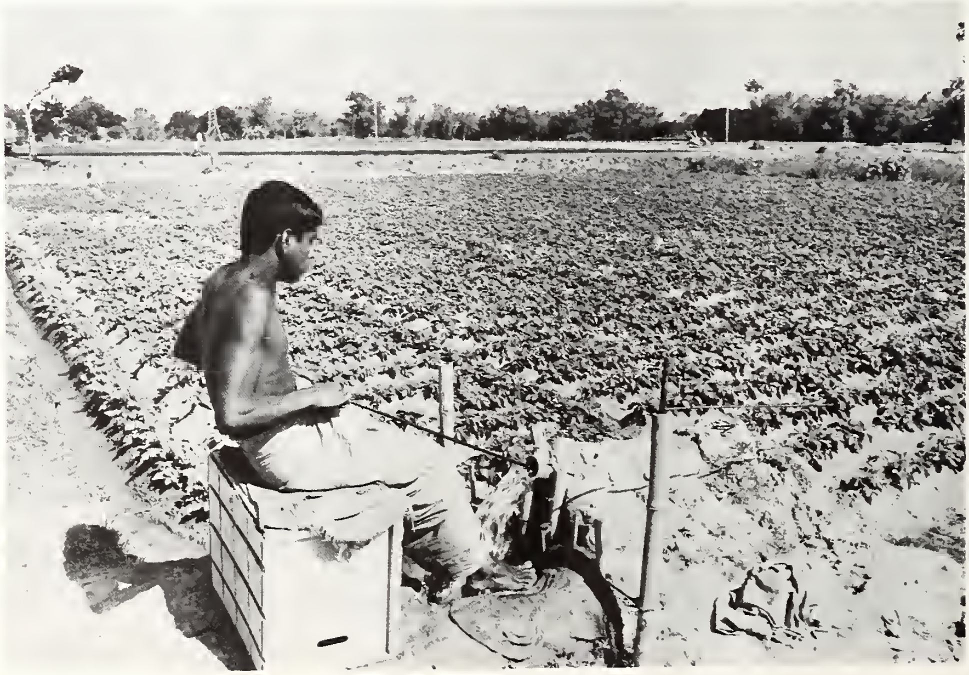
It is not the poorest farmers who have been buying the pump. Surveys conducted by MCC show that those who have bought pumps own, on the average, three acres. "These people are not rich farmers," observes Harder, "and we hope that they continue to buy pumps. But we also have to ask why the poorer farmers are not buying rower pumps" and continue to explore ways to help the poorest of the poor gain access to new technologies.

Notes Paul Myers, MCC secretary for South Asia, "The rower pump program reminds us that many of our programs, by their very nature, do not serve the poorest of the poor. But we must also remember that the farmers who buy our pumps are still very poor and that they too need our help."

George Klassen of Portage la Prairie, Man., former MCC worker in Bangladesh, designed and built the first rower pump in 1978. Dan Spare of St. John, Kan., another MCC Bangladesh worker, modified Klassen's design of the rower pump so that it was even easier to operate, maintain and repair.

The rower pump is also being tested in other countries, such as Thailand and Kampuchea. *Charmayne Denlinger Brubaker*

A Bangladeshi farmer uses a rower pump to irrigate a small field.



Through the Years — A Caring People

Menno Simons wrote in 1551: "All those who are born of God . . . are prepared by such love to serve their neighbors, not only with money and goods, but also after the example of Jesus Christ."

Mutual aid. Families share surplus garden produce . . . help each other move . . . donate time to cooperative efforts . . . open their homes to travelers. Mutual aid goes on all the time in the community.

Mutual aid works on a large scale, too. Since the 1940s Mennonite Mutual Aid has provided tools for us to use in helping each other . . . next door or in another state.

Mutual Aid Sunday, September 18, offers church groups the opportunity to celebrate over 400 years of mutual aid in practice. We look back at our history . . . yet we also look ahead, to new ways to be a caring, sharing people.

Mennonite
Mutual Aid

Post Office Box 483
Goshen, IN 46526

An ecumenical group of religious leaders is opposing renewal of the agreement for American military bases in the Philippines, according to the *National Catholic Reporter*. The proposed new agreement between the United States and the Philippines provides for continued use of the Subic Bay Naval Base and Clark Air Base, the largest U.S. bases in Asia. The United States will provide $900 million to the Marcos government during the next five years if the agreement is approved.

Environmental protection also protects jobs, according to International Association of Machinists president William Winpisinger. The union leader rejected the "deception and fraud behind those corporate lies" which say protecting the environment reduces employment. Speaking to a labor-environment coalition meeting, the union leader condemned President Reagan and his "corporate allies" for using "job blackmail" to "manipulate public opinion and scare workers on everything from military spending, civil rights, tax reform, urban development, public health and environment protection to safety and health in the work places."

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workers

Paul Allison, Irvington United Methodist Church, Indianapolis, began a two-year Mennonite Voluntary Service term June 4 for the Illinois Nuclear Weapons Freeze Campaign in Chicago. He has a bachelor's degree in elementary education from Depauw University in Greencastle, Ind., and a master's degree in social ethics from Butler University/Christian Theological Seminary in Indianapolis. His parents are Earl and Phoebe Allison of Evansville, Ind.

Roger Claassen, Grace Hill Church, Whitewater, Kan., has begun a two-year voluntary service assignment with Mennonite Central Committee in Washington, where he will work in legislative research. He has a bachelor's degree in agriculture from Kansas State University, Manhattan. His parents are John H. and Miriam Claassen of Whitewater.

Janet Culpepper, Lee Road Baptist Church, Cleveland, began a one-year MVS term March 1 as a resource development assistant for Hope Communities in Denver. She has a bachelor's degree in international studies from Allegheny College in Meadville, Pa., and served two years as a Peace Corps volunteer. Her parents are Cornelius and Doris Culpepper of Cleveland.

Misty Davis, Bethel Pentecostal Church, Antigonish, N.S., began a two-year MVS term July 1 working with senior citizens at the Olin Hotel in Denver. Her parents are Everett Davis and Dorothea Bush.

Gregory Fisher, Indian Valley Church, Harleysville, Pa., began a one-year MVS term May 18 as a day-care worker in Hutchinson, Kan. Richard and Sarah Fisher of Telford, Pa., are his parents.

Allison

Culpepper

L. Friesen

R. Friesen

Davis

Fisher

Gesner

Glenney

Lucille and *Russell Friesen*, Wildwood Church, Saskatoon, began two-year MVS terms May 3 working with mentally handicapped adults and in home repair, respectively, in Oklahoma City. Lucille has a bachelor's degree in psychology from the University of Saskatchewan. Russell studied agriculture three years at the same school. Their parents are Peter and Maria Funk of Drake, Sask., and John and Dora Friesen of Waldheim, Sask.

Scott Gesner, Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, Huntsville, Ala., began a two-year MVS term March 1 as a furniture coordinator at the Jeffco Action Center in Arvada, Colo. He studied two years at Southern College in Birmingham, Ala. His parents are Donald and Gladys Gesner of Huntsville.

Kenneth Glenney, Church of the Sequoias, Sequoia National Park, Calif., began a one-year MVS term April 27 doing renovation with People's Housing in Chicago. He studied geology two years at the University of Idaho. His parents are Kenneth and Angeline Glenney of Hollister, Mo.

Ann Hubrig, Interfaith Church, Irvine, Calif., begins a two-year MVS term in August working at a youth shelter for runaway teens in Seattle. She has a bachelor's degree in mathematics from the University of California at Irvine. Her parents are Walter and Dorothy Hubrig of Concord, Calif.

Lisa Manning, First Church of the Nazarene, Schenectady, N.Y., began a two-year MVS term June 13 working in senior services in Reedley, Calif. She has

The Colorado Committee for a Sustained Resistance at Rocky Flats has announced plans for ongoing resistance actions at the nuclear weapons plant near Denver, beginning Oct. 24. The committee invites individuals and groups from many communities to commit themselves to two or three days, or possibly a week, of witness at Rocky Flats. It is expected that participants will be committed to non-violence. The committee will provide cooking facilities and floor space for sleeping bags for those coming from outside the Denver area. For more information write Sustained Resistance, Box 1542, Arvada, CO 80001.

Reduce military spending $92 billion in the next three years without weakening defense, is the message of a group of hard-core Reaganites—the business executives who serve on the president's Private Sector Survey on Cost Control in Government. The panel said the Defense Department can (1) reform weapons purchasing, saving tens of billions of dollars in the next three years; (2) eliminate unneeded military bases, saving $2 billion to $5 billion; and (3) save $6.9 billion by revising pension plans which let some military officers retire at full pension at age 37.

U.S. aid could save 50 to 100 children who die each day in Ethiopia's famine, according to Bread for the World, a Christian anti-hunger group. "The issue for the United States is simple: Do humanitarian considerations or political preferences govern our response?" The answer, said Bread policy analyst Paul Nelson, is that politics rule. Because it opposes Ethiopia's Communist government, the United States is refusing to help the country's starving people, he charged.

RECORD

Hubrig

Manning

Nicloy

Osborne

Robinette

Tieszen

Meyer

Neufeld

Ritters

a bachelor's degree in dietetics from Olivet Nazarene College in Kankakee, Ill. Her parents are Rodger and Sharon Manning of Schenectady.

Bev Meyer, Cedar Falls (Iowa) Fellowship, began a two-year MVS term June 3 as a day-care worker in Markham, Ill. She has a bachelor's degree in social work from the University of Northern Iowa in Cedar Falls. Her parents are Irvin and Lavonne Meyer of George, Iowa.

Laurel Neufeld, Bethany Church, Freeman, S.D., began a two-year MVS term June 13 on the staff of Independence House, a residence for mentally or emotionally disabled in Markham, Ill. She has a bachelor's degree in social work from Bluffton (Ohio) College. Her parents are Ernest and Lila Neufeld of Freeman.

Scott Nicloy, Salvation Army, Petoskey, Mich., began a two-year MVS term June 13 working in senior services in Reedley, Calif. He has a bachelor's degree in psychology from Spring Arbor (Mich.) College. His parents are James and Carmelita Nicloy of East Jordan, Mich.

Margaret Osborne, West Richmond Friends Meeting, Richmond, Ind., began a two-year MVS term June 1 as co-coordinator of the New Vision Peace and Justice Center in Ames, Iowa. She has a bachelor's degree in philosophy from Furman University in Greenville, S.C., and has studied at Kansai University in Osaka, Japan, and at Earlham School of Religion in Richmond. Her parents are Floyd and the late Elizabeth Osborne of Eden, N.C.

Denise and *Mark Ritter*, St. Ann's Episcopal Church, Oceanside, Calif., begin one-year MVS terms Sept. 1 as co-managers of Yarrow Gardens apartments in Arvada, Colo. She has a bachelor's degree in English literature from the University of California at Berkeley. He has a bachelor's degree in history from the University of California at Berkeley and has studied at the University of Munich and Melodyland School of Theology in Anaheim, Calif. Their parents are Roger and Sally Noyes of Jutland, Calif., and William and Jean Ritter of Newport Beach, Calif.

Jane Robinette, Urbandale (Iowa) United Church of Christ, began a two-year MVS term June 1 as co-coordinator of the New Vision Peace and Justice Center in Ames, Iowa. She has a bachelor's degree in social work from the University of Northern Iowa in Cedar Falls. Her parents are James and Laurayne Robinette of Urbandale.

Kathy Tieszen, First Church, Aberdeen, Idaho, began a one-year MVS term June 13 working at the People Are Beautiful and N.E. YWCA programs in Portland, Ore. She has a bachelor's degree in English from Bethel College, North Newton, Kan. Her parents are LeVern and Margaret Tieszen of Aberdeen.

RESOURCES

Lois Landis Shenk's moving account of her struggle with mental illness, **Out of the Mighty Waters** (Herald Press, 1982), has received an Award of Excellence in the 1983 Religion in Media competition. "Out of the many dozens of entries in the competition, *Out of the Mighty Waters* stood out as a powerful influence for good," according to Mary Dorr, executive director of RIM.

Camp and school food directors, church dinner planners and others cooking for groups will find wholesome, tasty alternatives in **Simply Delicious**, edited by Grace Winn (Alternatives, Inc., 1983). The carefully compiled cookbook is written from the experiences of those who seek to eat and cook responsibly and who serve food in quantity. It emphasizes simple, nutritious foods.

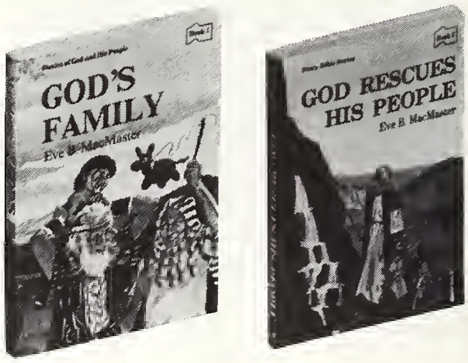
Eerdman's Atlas of the Bible (Eerdmans, 1983) is a compact guide to the world of the Bible that includes full-color maps, charts and photographs, as well as an easy-to-read text, to help Bible readers better understand the historical and geographical context of significant events in both the Old and New Testaments.

A series of 11 paperback books written "to examine the issue of Christian social justice in the United States" under the direction of the Claretian Fathers and Brothers is being distributed by Twenty-Third Publications out of Mystic, Conn. The books are **Racism in America**, **Apologies Good Friends**, **Christian Feminism**, **What One Christian Can Do About Hunger in America**, **Wave Goodbye to the Joneses**, **Homemade Social Justice**, **The New Nuns**, **Her Life for His Friends**, **The Browning of America**, **What One Christian Can Do to Help Prevent Nuclear War** and **Christian Business Ethics**.

A great deal of the criticism directed at corrections philosophy and systems comes from outsiders—academics, humanists and a few church people. In **Lawbreaking and Peacemaking** (Agenta Friends Press, 1982) Edgar Epp writes from his personal experience as a former superintendent of two prisons and a deputy minister of corrections. The booklet is available from Open Circle, 202-818 Portage Ave., Winnipeg, MB R3G 0N4 for $2.

An updated, annotated listing of significant printed and audiovisual resources on global issues is now available from Mennonite Central Committee, 21 S. 12th St., Akron, PA 17501. The nine-page listing includes books, study guides, references, youth and children's resources, periodicals and audiovisuals, as well as brief descriptions, prices and sources of all of these materials.

Mennonite Central Committee has released a new 25-minute filmstrip entitled **"The Bases of Our Fears."** The filmstrip examines the effect of the U.S. Naval Base at Subic Bay on local conditions in the Philippines. The color filmstrip is accompanied by a script, cassette soundtrack and study guide, and is available on a free-loan basis.



God Gives the Land, book 3 of Eve MacMaster's projected 10-volume Herald Press Story Bible Series, retells in simple, graphic language stories from Joshua, Judges and Ruth. The first two volumes are **God's Family**, which retells stories from Genesis, and **God Rescues His People**, based on the books of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy.

An activity book is being prepared to enhance the educational use of each volume of Eve MacMaster's Story Bible Series (Herald Press). The 8½ x 11

DRAMA

Native netherworld

"Main Street Priest," *by Menno Wiebe, commissioned by Native Ministries, Conference of Mennonites in Canada, premiere performance directed by Brenda Witmer, July 10, 1983, Gas Station Theatre, Winnipeg*

Reviewed by Larry Cornies, associate editor of The Mennonite

Having written enough poetry over the past two decades to comprise a sizable anthology, Menno Wiebe is no stranger to literary endeavor. "Main Street Priest," however, is his first full-length drama. It played to two packed houses—more than 400 people—during this year's CMC sessions.

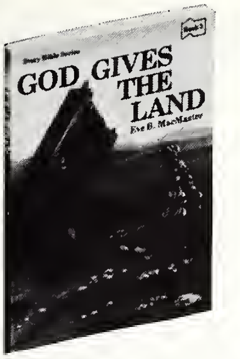
The play deals with the work of a young associate pastor, Jesiah, at an inner-city drop-in center, Club 12, sometime during the late '60s. We witness the strains and growth of relationships between club members, most of whom are native, the progress of Jesiah's education about the treatment of natives by white society, and the frustration of the church council of Club 12's sponsoring congregation about the lack of tangible results at the center.

We become especially well acquainted with one native Club 12 member, Michael Jim, and his search to find meaning in the church despite its insulated, monied, middle-class manifestations.

Wiebe successfully juxtaposes the world of the native with the world of affluent, white Christianity, which isolates itself from the plight of the urban poor with high, thick walls, both of brick and of emotion. Several scenes work well: the piety of the church council and its preoccupation with housekeeping items while it levels criticism against Club 12's program (none of the council members has been there in the last year), Michael Jim's imitation of a southern Manitoba pastor's recent visit to the club, and some of the struggles between Michael Jim and girlfriend Maggie Jane, where racial discrimination and unemployment further complicate an already fragile relationship.

MAIN STREET
priest
by menno wiebe

Yet the script needs more cutting and editing. Entire scenes should have been eliminated or shortened. More realism would be achieved if Wiebe's characters spoke less of their creator's poetry and more 1960s vernacular. And the play-



workbooks (64 pages) include instructive activities which Christian families, congregations and schools can use to educate their children in the stories, memories, beliefs and values of their biblical heritage.

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wright could trust his audience more to draw the appropriate lessons from the story instead of attempting to insure that they understand his work by giving characters numerous soliloquies or sending a narrator out from backstage from time to time.

Above all, we should get to know Jesiah better. Despite the play's title, the Main Street Priest's character, his attitude toward his work at Club 12, his innermost fears and greatest satisfactions—all remain something of a mystery, even by the drama's end. Jesiah is neither a sterile automaton, like some within the church he represents, nor a well-developed, interesting and engaging human being. Rather, he exists in a netherworld between the two. Judging from the difference Jesiah is able to make in Michael Jim's life, we presume that Wiebe intended the character to be the latter.

Despite the flaws of script and production, the author and commissioners of "Main Street Priest" are to be applauded for attempting to teach and report, respectively, in a creative and challenging fashion. The play represents a medium which the church should use more often for dialogue, instruction or simple reflection.

Native Ministries plans to make an edited videotape of the CMC production available to churches but has not yet decided about publication of "Main Street Priest."

COMMISSION ON EDUCATION

It Matters Where You Scatter

Each year more than 1,000 Mennonite students and young adults leave their home congregations for new surroundings. Many "scatter" to the city for employment, university study or a new experience. They are the new Mennonite immigrants. They leave their home congregation, often rural and small town, for the city and university locations. Each August COE urges congregations to update their Student and Young Adult Census by providing vital information about their scattered young adults. The 1982-83 census carried 5,014 names, half students and half urban young adults. Together with SYAS (Elkhart) COE has designated 113 Contact Persons throughout North America who have agreed to respond to inquiries from Mennonite young adults. Contact Persons are announced on an annual "It Matters Where You Scatter" poster provided for all GC and MC congregations.

Meet James L. Dunn,

Secretary for Young Adult and Church School Education. Jim joined COE in 1980. He helps congregations maintain relationships with young adults at home and away. He promotes and develops resources for young adults which strengthen and encourage Christian growth and Mennonite identity. Jim also helps congregations strengthen their ties with General Conference Mennonite schools.

Calendar

August 1983
28 Back to School Sunday
September 1983
11 Christian Education Sunday
October 1983
14-16 Marriage Encounter (Wichita)
21-23 Marriage Encounter (Salem, Ore.)

A Reason to Sing

complied and illustrated by Terry Stutzman

This book of daily devotions is written by and for students as a resource to support their devotional life. Congregations are encouraged to consider giving this inexpensive devotional book as a gift of love.

$1.95 U.S. Canada $2.35

Starting Out Life in the City

A/V slide presentation

Mennonite student and young adult migration to the city is the theme of this slide set commissioned for Bethlehem '83. Congregations and fellowships can use this resource as a tool to increase the group's awareness of what young adults are thinking, their identity and what the church is to them. Schedule this slide set through the Newton or Winnipeg offices.

Commission on Education
General Conference Mennonite Church
722 Main Street, Box 347
Newton, Kansas 67114

316/283-5100

Do you have a Student Aid Plan?

Marion Keeney Preheim

A student working for his Licensed Practical Nursing degree was having financial difficulty. When he was told his church's full tuition scholarship plan could help him, he transferred to a General Conference college to get this benefit.

A young man in his mid-20s wanted to attend seminary. Trained as an airplane mechanic and pilot, he had an interest in mission work. He was advised that financial help from his church was available for Mennonite Biblical Seminary.

Both of these people are from Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson, Neb. "We help the student and we help the school," said their committee chairman to explain the neat way a church student aid plan does double duty.

Set up and run by lay people, the Bethesda plan has five points: (1) to build an interest in the church, (2) to assist those who would have financial difficulty in going to a General Conference church school, (3) to promote greater interest in the church schools, (4) to aid in the development of leadership in the General Conference and its churches and (5) to enhance the finding of a life partner from those of similar faith and interest.

Last school year the Bethesda committee had some difficulty raising money since the cash flow was tight for many. Their strategy this summer is to have bulletin and newsletter announcements to explain the need in a regular church service and to hold a meeting for making pledges.

Some churches do not opt for full tuition grants as Bethesda does. The Menno Mennonite Church in Ritzville, Wash., stipulates that student aid funds available will be equally distributed to students applying. They also ask students to pay back 50 percent of the aid they receive. Pastor Paul Isaak stressed the voluntary nature of this. They don't even keep records of who pays money back.

Another difference is that they designate only Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., as the place to go, rather than all GC schools. Bethel was chosen for a geographic reason. However, the church has a loan fund for other colleges—even secular ones.

Quite unique are churches which have endowments for scholarship aid. One such is Grace Mennonite Church, Pandora, Ohio, which has a Kraft Memorial Fund. Money is generated from the interest on $10,000 donated by the Kraft family.

"It's an important way of helping young people when they leave for college," said Roger Siebert, pastor there when the fund was started. He emphasizes the importance of the church setting the guidelines for the money's use and keeping in touch with the donors on what the church decides.

A question asked about congregational student aid in general is, "Is it a tax dodge?" Some feel that it is. However, people other than parents of students are also encouraged to contribute to such funds. Experience shows that this is happening. Some parents cannot contribute much or anything at all; yet a fund can aid their children just like the rest.

What is exciting is the way in which individuals are being helped. The financial burden for college used to be just a family responsibility, but it is now shared in many places by the church at a time when government aid is not keeping pace with costs. What better way is there to send off our children than with the care of the congregation visibly expressed?

Education and the international dimension

Arnold Snyder

"If to understand and to be reasonable is common to all men, then . . . we are fellow citizens (and) the world is as it were a city."—Marcus Aurelius, *Meditations*

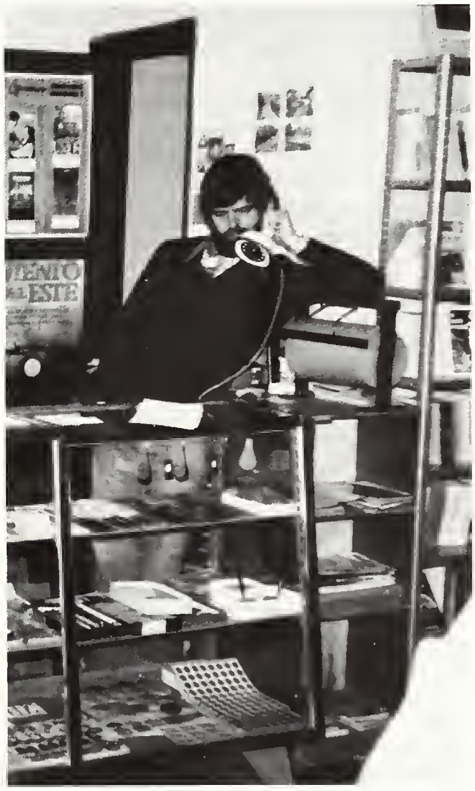
"That was the true light which gives light to every man who comes into the world."—John 1:9

It has become commonplace to say that we are citizens of the world, not just citizens of a country. But it is one thing to state a truth and quite another to experience it. I had the privilege—and the disadvantage—of growing up in two cultures simultaneously, the Latin American and the North American. The advantages are obvious; from as far back as I can recall I have felt at home in both cultures, linguistically and otherwise. The disadvantage is that I took the existence of both cultures for granted.

My true international education didn't take place until my wife and I and two small children arrived in Freiburg, West Germany, late on a Friday afternoon, exhausted from long travels in plane and train. I had stopped a patient *Hausfrau* and was paging madly through my German phrasebook for "Where is an inexpensive hotel, please?" when I realized that we were far from home, at the complete mercy of strangers. I also realized that the dear lady whom I had detained had the grace and patience of a saint. That night our prayers of thanks in the hotel room were especially heartfelt.

My personal example of "international education" may seem trivial, but in retrospect I consider what I learned on that Freiburg sidewalk to have been vitally important. I discovered my true situation as a human being, as a citizen of a world larger and stranger than I could pretend to master; I saw myself as a fellow-traveler with other human beings who were, for the most part, cheerfully willing to help me muddle through. Living in a strange culture was a first-class lesson in trust and humility, a time when concrete acts of faith made daily functioning possible and when God's good gifts were received with joy and thanksgiving.

To my mind there are few educational experiences that can compare to intensive, directed life and study in a culture not one's own. If one of the central aims of church-related higher education is to promote an understanding of life's realities from the perspective of faith, then cross-cultural experiences have few parallels. They are "reality therapy" of the highest order; they can and do awaken faith and encourage commitment and action. I have seen it happen.



Peter Stucky, manager of La Luz, a Mennonite bookstore in Bogota, Colombia

In the spring of 1982 I traveled with a group of Bluffton College students to Bogota, Colombia, where we participated in the PCNA program organized by Peter Stucky—an experience we plan to repeat. For all of us who went to Colombia, myself included, the program initiated a series of revelations that continue to affect us to this day. To be completely honest, the Colombia group became so interested in Latin American matters that we began to bore our Bluffton friends. In a political theory class recently, a non-Colombia student identified the problem. "This stuff means a lot to you because you've been there. But we haven't." I agreed entirely with him but suggested that the remedy was obvious; he too must go and see for himself what all the fuss was about.

The level of interest that emerged from the PCNA seminar was the result of our having been educated. We learned to know a people that is growing in Christian faith in ways that directly challenged us to greater faithfulness; we began to understand what life is like in a country that is struggling to develop its own political and economic future against enormous odds; we had to look at our own country and its policies from the perspective of our Colombian friends, and we were disturbed and ashamed by what we saw. How could such experiences not leave their mark? This was one course in which it has been impossible to take the final and then forget the content. The "final" continues; the reality still challenges us.

We live in an age when achievements in technology have redefined communication. We no longer have to rely on printed words for information about the world; the wonder of telecommunications brings the world into our living rooms daily. It is easy for us to imagine that we now know what is happening in the world, that we understand the facts concerning world events. But the fact is that our electronic media insulate and isolate us at the same time that they inform us; our media present us with selective slices of life. There is as yet no educational substitute for direct experience; we cannot make friends with TV images. As Christians concerned with building worldwide bridges of peace and understanding, we must continue to foster the international dimension of education. I know of no better way of doing this than by stepping beyond our comfortable borders and sharing in the lives of our brothers and sisters worldwide. We have much to learn.

Arnold Snyder is associate professor of history at Bluffton College, Bluffton, OH 45817.

books

Student devotions

A Reason to Sing, *edited by Terry Stutzman (Faith and Life Press, 1983, 63 pages)*

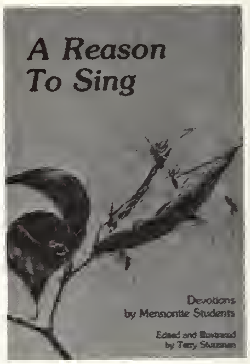
Reviewed by James H. Waltner, 204 Gregory, Normal, IL 61761

This book of devotions by Mennonite students contains 34 brief meditations. Editor and illustrator Terry Stutzman, a 1982 graduate of Bluffton (Ohio) College, now serves as assistant director of information services at Goshen (Ind.) College.

Themes of these devotions are drawn from the life and personal needs and problems of college students. The pressure to achieve, integrating knowledge and faith, loneliness, dealing with the down days, and moments of praise are topics. While most focus on the personal experiences of faith, several deal with relationships, witnessing and issues of Christian justice.

Thirty-two students contributed devotions. Two are from overseas. Each devotional (except two) uses a Scripture passage as reference. Underlying the devotions is a theme of praise and "a reason to sing."

Stutzman, who is an artist, has used 20 illustrations in an unobtrusive way to add interest and give visual basis for further reflection.


A Reason To Sing
Devotions by Mennonite Students
Edited and Illustrated by Terry Stutzman

I see the primary value of this booklet for use by young people for personal devotions. Congregations will do well to learn from this little booklet that many of our students are serious about Christian faith. This will be a helpful book to give to students leaving for college as a congregation's way of caring and saying to our young people, "Don't neglect to cultivate the spirit."

MUSIC

A believer's journey

Many Gifts, *songs by Patty Shelly (Faith and Life Press, 1983)*

Reviewed by Dave Graber, 1200 N. Elm, Newton, KS 67114

Patty Shelly's new recording is part of a growing current of new hymnody that recalls the era crowned by Isaac Watts and Charles Wesley, when thousands of hymns were written by countless people for use in their immediate Christian environment without expectation that their songs would endure and become great hymns. Shelly and others like her are beginning in our time to meet a need similarly stimulated by a spiritual renewal movement. This need is for new, dispensable songs written in the style and instrumentation heard literally on our street corners.

Like Wesley's hymns, the songs on *Many Gifts* represent a musical departure from the norm of traditional church music. But Shelly's songs are only a small sample of a large current of new creative expression, more consistent with the music of secular society, playing a significant role in the renewal movement in churches of nearly all denominations. This move toward the "profane," as opposed to the "sacred," in music for worship was a cause of sometimes violent opposition to Wesley's "Methodism." Ironically, our contemporary understanding of sacred and secular musical styles has made his hymns today devoid of secular implications in music or text. It's significant that the church in our time has sensed what surely is the movement of God's Spirit by encouraging the use of songs such as those on *Many Gifts*.

While the music of this recording contains many cliches from a variety of contemporary music without regard to secular or sacred implications, the choice of lyrics is exclusively biblical and clearly Christian. Gone are the individualistic sentimentalities of much of popular music. Shelly's songs, unlike many contemporary gospel lyrics, also avoid substituting the deity in trite lovesong phrases. Instead, the expressions of adoration are a corporate praise to God, the admonitions are consistent with or paraphrases of Scripture, and most of the songs are suitable for group singing. Her lyrics are a proper departure from popular rock, gospel, country and other popular lyrics while emulating the musical norms of these genre.

Patty Shelly
Many Gifts
"There are many gifts but the same Spirit
Faith and Life Press

The songs of *Many Gifts* are ordered in a sequence that reflects a believer's journey through life, from "I am going. . ." (to follow Christ, the first song) to "The Lord lift you up" (the last song). Between these songs are a description of the blessings of being among God's people, based on phrases from Ephesians, a paraphrase of 1 Corinthians 13, several songs that connect Christian love to peace and justice, a beautiful praphrase of Psalm 137 and other songs of hope and praise around an unaccompanied mixed quartet arrangement of Shelly's communion hymn.

All the lyrics are strong and easily understandable even on a small cassette player. A few of the songs are a bit heavy with jazz rhythms, complex harmonies and an improvisation by an admittedly talented saxophone player. But generally the solo cello, sax and guitar are a pleasing complement to the standard instrumentation of piano, drums and bass. The songs with a sparer instrumentation seem stronger melodically and easier to listen to repeatedly. There is a strength in the striking stylistic changes in the last three songs—from contemporary Chicago jazz to Mennonite unaccompanied quartet singing to black gospel—but some ears may find such contrasting changes difficult to bridge.

MEDITATION

I am with you always

One experience each of us must face is growing up and leaving the protective arms of home. Many articles are written for parents on how to cope with empty feelings when their children test their wings and leave the nest, but few mention the feelings of insecurity a young adult faces as he or she enters the world alone.

The summer before my first year of college, feelings of doubt and uncertainty surfaced. I suddenly realized that when Labor Day rolled around I wouldn't be walking up the familiar sidewalk, entering the familiar high school building and greeting familiar faces of lifelong friends. I knew the sidewalks would be different, the buildings large and foreboding, and friends few and far between. The life I had known for 18 years would soon drastically change. I knew that when I'd need security and love, I would be far away from the home I loved. I was scared. I had forgotten Paul's familiar words, ". . . nothing will ever be able to separate us from the love of God. . ." (Romans 8:38, 39, LB).

When I entered college, these feelings didn't miraculously go away. I wasn't immediately filled with happiness and a sense of belonging. As much as I had dreamed of college, I would have been the happiest girl in the world if I could have loaded every one of my worldly possessions back into our van, turned around and headed home—where I belonged. This general feeling continued through half of my first year. I was quite homesick and spent most of my time thinking about home and wishing I was there with Mom and Dad instead of at school by myself.

Since my first year of college I have learned a lot about coping with fear and loneliness. The advice given by David in Psalm 45:10, "I advise you, O daughter, not to fret about your parents in your homeland far away" (LB) caught my eye. Though I had read psalms many times before, this verse held special meaning for me that first year of school. It suddenly became clear to me that worrying about home and family members is not necessary because God is watching over us while we are apart from each other.

No matter how alone and afraid we feel, we are never truly alone. It is easy when we are feeling lonely to fall into the trap of self-pity and forget that God is always there to lean on. Just before his return to heaven, Jesus assured his disciples that he would be with them always. I believe we too can be confident of his constant presence. If we truly believe the promise given in Matthew 28:20, "I am with you always, even to the end of the world" (LB), we need not fear even when faced with the most difficult situations, for we know our Lord is always with us.

Arnita Yoder

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Here we are in the second half of August. It's time to think of school because doors will swing open in a few weeks.

What does education mean for you? How do you choose a vocation? Does God "work" like we think of work?

Learning is for all people—whether in school, in church or—wherever we are. And somehow learning and discipleship and faith and play and career need to be integrated. Pray for God's Spirit to guide you as you read this issue.

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EDITORIAL

Know your roots and discover your wings

James L. Dunn

"Knowing our roots" and "discovering our wings" are rich images of two basic human needs. We need to belong, to be connected and come to terms with our tradition, our culture and our faith. Likewise we need to go further, spring free and fly beyond what is to what might be—to find the real us in our beautiful, stimulating, "awe-full" world.

Young adults search. They seek identity—Who am I? They look for community—Where am I loved? They want power—How can I make a difference?

The identity question is universal—not confined to the boundaries of age, sex, education, race or religion. We all seek self-awareness, esteem, trust and affection. Young adults are often mistakenly seen as the sole possessors of the drive for self-discovery. In error, we categorize them and set them apart from the rest of the church rather than join them or seek their leadership in the universal search for self-knowledge.

Feeling separated either by their own choice or that of others, young adults look for a new community. This search for another community commonly takes them away from their home and church. Some young adults experiment with radical life changes as they sense the compelling desire to step aside from their roots and do it their own way. Others probe new avenues for community—counterculture, upward social mobility, radical Christian discipleship—where they can be themselves seemingly unbound by tradition.

Again we often err by assuming the desire to belong is peculiar to young adults. Whether young or old, we need one another. We need to both be accepted and make our contribution to a group that matters.

This leads to consideration of a third drive. Young adults also want the power to make a difference. When our world seems hopelessly in despair—with the possibility of total obliteration at the push of a button—young adults, rather than staying the course, want to change it.

Young adults are not just idealistic; they are realistic. They seek to make a difference for justice and peace. As they live and create a different lifestyle by modeling vulnerability—economically, politically, spiritually—they exercise their power to bring hope to a despairing world.

The agenda of young adults is the desire of everyone. All people need to experience a sense of roots that provides the backdrop in our pilgrimage for identity, community and power. Yet we often come to know and appreciate those roots only when we are free to discover our wings.

In the past the Christian community has faithfully responded to the vision of providing institutions—churches, denominations, Bible schools, colleges, seminaries, voluntary service and other missions programs—that encourage us both to know our roots and discover our wings. These resources are recognized as ministries of the church not only with and for young adults but with and for members of all ages. It is exciting to live in a day when the visions and resources of the churchwide family—young, middle adult, older—are employed for the mission of being God's faithful family, rooted in the faith and winged for service in our needy world.

Within the next few weeks many young adults will begin another year of study. This back-to-school issue of *The Mennonite* is planned to help the church visualize our schools as vital tools for our congregational mission. Experience has proved it is at our church schools where most of our young and older adults best grow in their understanding of themselves, the church and God's world.

THE MENNONITE

OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST

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“One is to enter into a style of life [illegible] attitudes, priorities, goals, and actions are all directed toward the life of Jesus and his kingdom.”

Work at your calling

Bryce Nelson and *Dwight Nelson*

"And what do you do?"

How often we have been on the receiving end of that phrase. It is an innocent question, but one that forces the one questioned to give an important answer. Using only a phrase, we are expected to reveal something of our status and self-worth to a stranger.

The answers we normally give or expect to hear are statements about work. When we describe to others what we do, we sometimes add an explanation. "I do what I do because:

"I like it.

"I'm stuck and can't afford to change jobs.

"Somebody has to stay home and take care of the kids and the house.

"I've got to make a living somehow.

"I'm good at it.

"It pays well.

"I got laid off at my other job.

"I never thought of doing anything else.

"I like to help other people.

"I no longer know why I keep doing this."

Sound familiar? We give these and similar reasons all the time to help explain how we spend our workday, and how our workday defines who we are.

How we spend our workday is of particular importance to Christians. What we do for work should not be at odds with biblical guidelines about work. Hence, Christians need to think biblically about their jobs. While work is not a major biblical theme, there are some helpful references. These references are found especially in Genesis, the teachings of Jesus and the writings of Paul.

Genesis. In the Genesis creation account, God brings the world into being through a series of purposeful and orderly actions. We refer to the creation as the "work" or "handiwork" of God. This creative activity was satisfying to God because he pronounced it to be "good" when he finished. Adam and Eve were also given creative tasks to do in the garden as they became the name givers and caretakers of the creation of God. These tasks had importance and responsibility to them, and Adam and Eve probably gained a great deal of satisfaction in carrying out their duties.

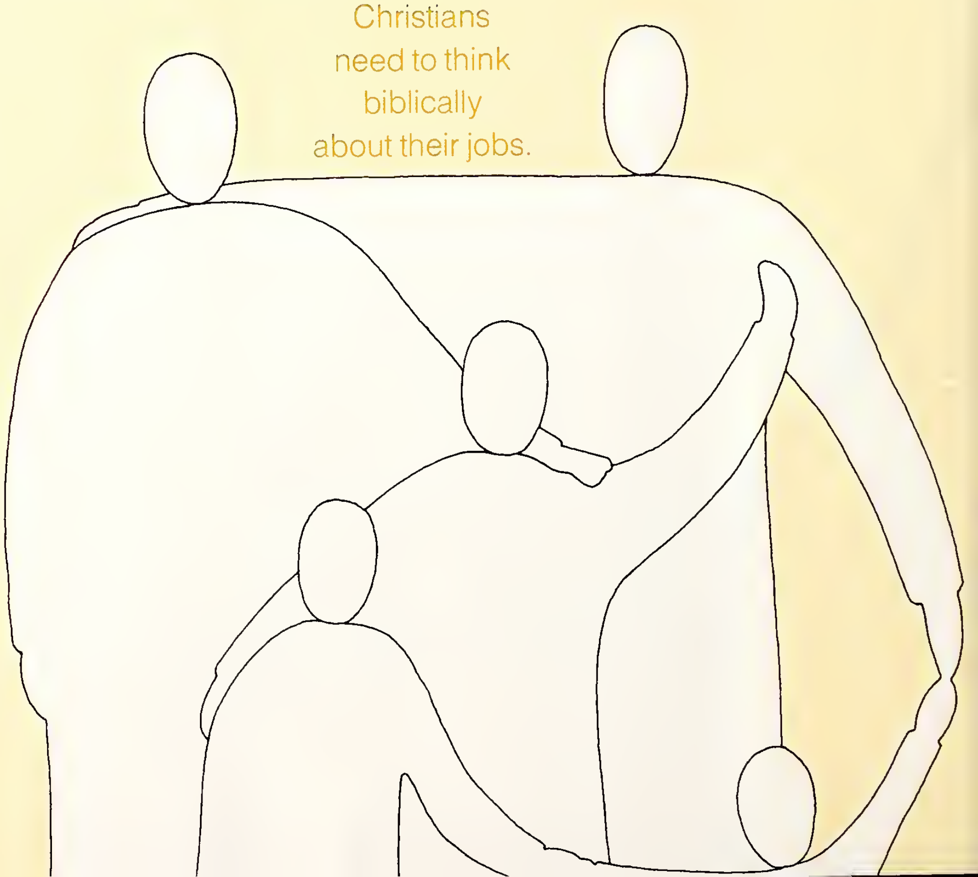
People today experience something of that sense of satisfaction and accomplishment in the work they do. Work as we know it, however, actually begins after the fall into sin. In Genesis 3:17-19, God tells Adam that he has sinned by eating from the tree. Therefore, "cursed is the ground because of you," says God. In the future, only through "painful toil" and "by the sweat of your brow" would Adam grow food in order to eat. Work becomes part of the curse of sin even as it continues to carry with it some of the elements of purpose and satisfaction in life. There is no way to eliminate the curse of work from life until the consummation of the kingdom of God.

The Genesis creation story shows two negative aspects to work. First, work involves continuous struggle. Adam is told that the "painful toil" is to last "all the days of your life" (Genesis 3:17-19). The second negative aspect is what work does to the relationship between people and God. It is one of the consequences of our broken relationships with God. There has always been the temptation for people to spend too much time on work, thereby avoiding restoration of that relationship. Spending too much time working has resulted not only in broken spiritual relationships, but broken human relationships as well. The commandment in Exodus 20 to keep the Sabbath holy can be seen as the response of God to the tendency of people to escape God by filling their lives with work. We work in order to eat but rest to find God. Only in the balance between work and rest (worship) can we find the kingdom of God.

The teachings of Jesus. Jesus spoke to people who were as concerned as people today about jobs, money and prestige, yet he did not give them specific directions for occupations. Rather, Jesus spoke about living faithfully in the kingdom of God. The basic teaching of Jesus which pertained to jobs was, "Seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well" (Matthew 6:33, NIV).

Jesus called people away from their work to follow him. It is significant that his disciples left their work to follow a teacher. Their highest priority in life was salvation rather than pleasure, affluence or self-fulfillment. As a result their real needs in life were met apart from work, and they went on to become apostles. In the incident with Mary and Martha (Luke 10:38-42), Jesus made it clear that a person must not miss the important things in life because of work demands. Neither should a person think that the rewards of work have any im-

Christians need to think biblically about their jobs.



The gospel calls us to make sure our vocation and work are compatible with the kingdom of God.

portance compared to spiritual realities.

In the parable of the rich fool (Luke 12:13-21), Jesus tells of a successful man with a bumper crop of grain. He considered building bigger barns to store his grain and goods, thinking that his wealth would bring him security and maybe even salvation. The rich man said to himself, "You have plenty of good things laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry." But God said to him, "You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?" Jesus concluded by saying, "This is how it will be with anyone who stores up things for himself but is not rich toward God."

Jesus was clear about our relationship with God being our primary task in life. Our attitudes toward our work must always be in submission to our relationship with God.

The writings of Paul. Paul's life and teaching was a good example of the place of work outlined in both Genesis and the teaching of Jesus. In Paul's advice to the Thessalonian Christians, he encouraged them to "lead a quiet life, to mind your own business and to work with your hands." The point of following such advice was both to "win the respect of outsiders" and "not be dependent on anybody" (1 Thessalonians 4:11-12, NIV).

Paul himself worked with his hands as a tentmaker. In Philippians 4:11-13, Paul's reference to "want and plenty" suggests that there were times in his tentmaking career when he was financially successful. He presumably had the "respect of outsiders" and was "not dependent on anybody." Making tents was Paul's work, but it did not interfere with his relationship to God or his primary calling as a servant of Christ. Paul found a balance between work and rest, and between his job and vocation. His self-esteem and self-worth were not totally dependent on making and selling tents.

Work and vocation. So there is an important biblical distinction between work and vocation. Vocation is our calling, our understanding of what we do in the kingdom of God. It may or may not be the same as what we do to put bread on the table and pay the mortgage. At minimum, work is defined as what we do during the day to keep ourselves alive. Most of us place far more importance upon work. Many people understand their work as that which they do to acquire financial security, time, pleasure and social standing. Commonly we think about our lives in terms of either work or time off. We work in order to gain time away from work. We use that time at our discretion, and often for pleasure.

Vocation refers to our calling in life, our understanding of where we fit into the kingdom of God. A vocation can be the same as our job, but it can just as easily be quite different. For example, a person can feel called to work with children or adolescents. That person could serve as an unpaid youth group leader, Sunday school teacher, scout leader or coach of a team. However, if that person did similar things while employed by a church, YMCA, scouting organization, park department, school or the like, then working with young people would be that person's job. A job and vocation can be the same, but they do not have to be. This distinction between work (job) and vocation (calling) is essential. The gospel calls us to make sure that our vocation and work are compatible with the kingdom of God (Matthew 6:25-34).

The gospel changes the primary question for a Christian examining his or her job from that of how to succeed in the judgment of a crass, success-oriented society to that of how to enter the kingdom of God. A Christian is called into faith in Jesus Christ, into inclusion in the kingdom and the church, into a new, separate and holy life, and into the task of making disciples throughout the entire world. The Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20) is the answer to the question of what the church does here on earth.

Jesus never defined the kingdom of God in a clear and systematic way, but spoke about it in parables. The kingdom was found in individuals and groups who lived by faith, constructed their lives on obedience to God and followed the model of Christ as servant.

The word vocation is not found in the New Testament, but the root word "calling" (in Greek, *kaleo*) has an important place, especially in the writings of Paul. Jesus does not use the word, but his emphasis on living in the kingdom of God and his command to follow him relate closely to the meaning Paul gives to calling.

A calling is not initially to a specific task. Rather, one is called to enter into a faithful relationship with Jesus Christ and become part of his holy people. Paul writes that God has "called us to a holy life" (2 Timothy 1:9), a notion also found in 1 Corinthians 1:2, Ephesians 1:4 and 2:10. The primary meaning of calling is that one is to enter into a style of life in which attitudes, priorities, goals and actions are all directed toward the life of Jesus and his kingdom.

Calling is a word that belongs to the church and is used to describe a special style of life which originates in the will of God and is expressed in entry into a life of faith in Jesus Christ. It always refers to the life of a Christian in relationship to the church, through which the specific actions of the calling are worked out (Galatians 1:11-17). Paul, for example, did not choose to be a missionary to the gentiles but was sent by the church at Antioch.

For Paul, the calling that comes from God to his people is a definite action of God in accordance with his will, which draws an individual into a faith relationship with Jesus Christ, leads to a holy life in the community of believers and is expressed in a variety of gifts and particular forms of service (Ephesians 4). This calling is primary in life and must always precede and hold authority over that which a person chooses as one's life work.

Although they used different terminology, both Paul and Jesus placed the highest value in life on vocation, since it related to the will of God, the kingdom of God and the life of the church. It remains important that we discover our vocations in life and that the vocation be followed no matter what the cost.

The basic esteem needs of a person are met on the level of vocation rather than on the level of life work. When vocation is allowed to take its proper biblical place in a person's life, and especially when it takes its rightful place in the life of a church, then the real difficulties that come as a result of our work (or lack of it) lose their power to paralyze or manipulate God's people through fear or loss of status. "Making a living" becomes just that, and one can share with Paul his attitude of "abounding in plenty and in want." •

I was among the unemployed

Robert Jones

UNEMPLOYMENT
LAYOFFS
NO JOBS
A.S.

It's an all too familiar sight as I drive to work each morning. The building sits there like some giant lump of concrete amid other slightly used and disreputable structures one often sees on the fringes of the downtown area of the city. Winding out of the building and along its broad western expanse is a single-file line of men and women, old and young, looking for all the world like some Depression-era soup line. Inside, the line is just as long as it snakes its way to the teller-like cages in the small and airless room.

As I flash to memories of this building three years ago, I remember the office of the Indiana Employment Security Division in Fort Wayne as a focal point of an experience that humbled and angered me as I worked through a painful period in my life.

I lost my job on Jan. 1, 1980. The company was leaving town. I wasn't. I was not to find another job until almost five months later. For the first time in my adult working life I was unemployed.

The first few days of unemployment were not all that unpleasant. I slept in,

"I survived more than triumphed as the Lord allowed me to go through the fire to point out my shortcomings."

caught the conclusion of "The Today Show" and leisurely read the newspaper. I had already sent out about 100 job resumés and made numerous personal contacts. I determined there was little else to do but be calm and available. The first few days were the easy part. As the days dragged on, there came a numbing sameness. The routine of leaving the house for work each morning had been replaced by a routine of inactivity and downright slothfulness. I became a virtual prisoner of my home, afraid to leave because I might miss an important phone call or the mail.

My outside social contacts were fairly well restricted to church, a meeting of my small group or a club luncheon downtown. The standard greeting of "How's it going?" came to be a grating reminder that "it" was not going well.

Up to that point in my life my position as a public relations director for the large consumer electronics company seemed secure. I had a handle on my future and had accepted my employment as almost a birthright. I had status. I had responsibility. I had the respect of my peers. I had a job.

As my world unraveled during those four months, I began to know a wrenching, quiet desperation. The phone was not ringing and the mailman was bringing other urgent reminders of my situation. Bills. Was I to be permanently unemployed? It did cross my mind. Looking back with the perfect hindsight of three years, it now seems almost a foolish thought.

In the meantime I had joined the ranks of the jobless, queuing up each Tuesday at the unemployment office. The highlight of each Tuesday was the half-hour wait for the 10-second conversation with a young woman who would inquire as to my initiative in seeking another job. Once I had signed a voucher for my $84 a week, I was free to go home until the next week.

Another discomforting aspect of joblessness, other than my inability to earn a living and provide for my family, was my Mennonite faith. Although not an ethnic Mennonite, I early on sensed the value Mennonites place on the work ethic. I thought that being jobless and being Mennonite was a contradiction in terms. This attitude was reflected on Sunday mornings as I found myself avoiding even casual conversations with members of the congregation because I thought they could not even begin to understand my situation. Even worse, I was chairman of the congregation. So goeth pride.

It wasn't until a few months later, after I had spoken on my experience at a Sunday worship service at Maplewood, that I learned how many had felt my hurt and had been praying for me. I had forgotten, ignored or neglected to note the many small acts of kindness and ministry offered to me and my family during that time. Unfortunately, being out of a job can be distracting.

It would be nice to report that this period was a shining moment of victory over adversity. In all honesty, I cannot. Looking back at my prayer life, for instance, I now see it as a series of quick fix petitions to God, unmindful of the Scriptures in 1 John 5:12 that say, "And we are sure of this, that he will listen to us whenever we ask for anything in his will." My prayers were more in tune with *my* will, not *his*.

Oh, I did find a job. A good one. It's a position in public relations with a small Bible college in Fort Wayne.

My regret is that I didn't make more of the experience than I did, using it to make a statement of Christian witness. I survived more than triumphed as the Lord allowed me to go through the fire to point out my shortcomings.

Having survived this trial I now believe I am more sensitive to his will, that I can more effectively minister to others in similar situations and have already had the opportunity to do so, and that there is a new appreciation of the support of the body of Christ—of the many prayer warriors who prayed me through this time of crisis. I am less job-oriented now, I believe, and strive to be more people-oriented.

It's good to have a job. But that's not all there is to life. •

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I saw God working

Frank R. Trnka

It was my first weekend as emergency chaplain at North Memorial Hospital in Minneapolis. I had spent Friday night in my stuffy cubicle, lying wide-eyed on the bed with the cursed beeper in my breast pocket feeling like it weighed 10 times its actual weight. Even cut fingers sometimes made me woozy, and I was dreading what awful disasters I might be called to.

The first call came late Saturday afternoon from a nursing home. They had a woman who was dying—who had no church—and they wanted someone to come and say a prayer for her.

As I pulled up to the place, I wondered what I was getting into. It was like entering hell. Eight or so tough-guy types were loitering around the entrance. Inside the elevator large hunks of wallpaper had been ripped from the sides and left dangling. Screaming senility and various deformities were everywhere with no sign of staff people.

I finally located a nurse who took me to the room. A thin elderly woman was lying on the bed with oxygen tubes coming from her nose. Her mouth was wide open and dry. She was gasping for breath and grasping the siderails of the bed. All her energy focused on each breath. She was unresponsive, seemingly unable to either see or speak.

Sitting on a chair beside her was a young woman the nurse introduced as her friend. She apologized for calling me, saying she had not known where else to turn. She worked at the hospital and thought maybe a chaplain would come so at least the woman would not die without a prayer.

She said she had known the woman years before when she was a child but had not seen her again until recently when they met in her work at the hospital. The old woman had come in as a patient with emphysema. In talking with her she found out what had happened to her over the years.

The old woman's husband had left her 20 years ago. Her only son was a successful writer living in England and he did not want to be bothered with her. She had lived as a hermit for 13 years. A neighbor brought groceries once a week; otherwise she saw no one. This friend found out that the old woman no longer had a house to live in.

The hospital would only keep her as long as Medicare covered the expenses. Since this friend lived alone too, there would have been no one at her apartment to care for the dying woman while she was at work. Because the good nursing homes had long waiting lists, she felt forced to bring her to this *hole*.

She did not want her to die alone. (I could not imagine the horror of sitting for days with someone waiting while their lungs filled with fluid and they finally choked to death. Already after 15 minutes I was beginning to get lightheaded and tense.) She was a Catholic and wanted the woman to have anointing or at least a prayer. I offered to call a priest, but she said a prayer would be fine.

I peeled the old woman's hand from the bedrail and held it; her friend took the other and we made a circle. After the prayer she told me I did not need to wait. But I didn't feel I could just be one more person who didn't care, so I said I would wait. We did not know how much the old woman knew of what was going on, but I felt certain she could feel our presence if we continued to hold her hands.

The young woman talked of how hard it was for her to be close to people. She felt alone much of the time, but it had been easy for her to be close to this woman. She hoped someone would be with her when she died.

The old woman's breaths were getting fewer and then suddenly stopped. The end at least was peaceful.

The nurse came in and checked her pulse, confirmed her death, thanked the woman for being her friend and me for coming. The nurse left and we cried for a while.

After the initial grief had passed, the young woman shared that she felt some burden about the hospital, nursing home and funeral bills—wondering if they would let her pay them a little at a time from her checks.

I was blown over. The woman was dead. They couldn't collect from her. Why feel obligated? Surely welfare had provisions for this kind of situation? Couldn't they collect from the son or something?

As I left I told her I thought she had done a beautiful thing and that I hoped she would seek out some help with the bills. She thanked me for coming.

I went down that grimy elevator with the ripped wallcovering and out into the night, awed at having seen God working so visibly through a fellow human being.

Many people die daily and are left at the morgue with only a tag to identify their corpses. No friends, no people show up to care.

Learn from the fish and from the fowl

Ken Peterson

"And God said, 'Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creatures that hath life'. . ." (Genesis 1:20a). Scientists have named and described about 21,000 kinds of fish. Fish live almost anywhere there is water—in near-freezing waters of the Arctic and in steaming waters of tropical jungles, in roaring mountain streams and quiet underground rivers.

The fish of the sea rank among the most nourishing of foods and help to keep the number of plants and animals on the earth in balance. They feed on some plants and animals; are food themselves for others. God created the moving creatures of the sea.

"And God blessed them saying . . . 'let fowl multiply in the earth'. . ." (Genesis 1:22). There are over 9,000 species of birds, about 25,000 species together with subspecies. Birds of prey have powerful feet and claws—like the eagles, hawks and falcons. Perching birds rest in trees above the ground, giving us the songs of the sparrows, robins, ravens, larks and starlings.

Birds eat weed seeds, helping farmers keep their fields free of weeds. Birds also eat insect pests that attack crops. Some of the larger birds—such as hawks and owls—kill rats and mice that eat farmers' grain. They help protect trees by eating insects that would make many trees unfit for lumber. God created the fowl that fly in the air.

God has uniquely created the fish to swim in the waters. They have movable structures that help them swim and keep their balance—with fairly tough skin—and can move their fins with their muscles. Most bony fish have a swim bladder below the backbone, which gives them buoyancy, enabling them to remain at a particular depth.

God has uniquely created the birds to fly in the sky. The skeleton of a bird is especially suited for flying. Each bone is as thin and small as it can be and still strong enough to support the bird's body. Muscles make up more than half of their weight; the largest and strongest are the breast muscles which move the wings. The feathers are an engineering accomplishment of strength required for the stresses imposed in flight and provide smooth and streamlined body contours essential for reduction of air friction. Feathers are replaced one at a time, and the sequence is such that there is no loss of ability to fly.

Birds fly for the same reason airplanes can fly. The pressure of air on top of the bird's wings is less than the air pressure below, when it is in flight. The wings are arranged so that on the downbeat the feathers are pressed together so no air can pass through. The feathers open on the upstroke, allowing the air to flow through.

The fish that swim and the birds that fly point to an amazing Intelligent Designer who created the ability to swim in the sea and fly in the sky.

The fish that swim and the birds that fly—both practice the mystery of migration. The European eels cross 3,000 miles of ocean to reach their spawning grounds in the Western Atlantic, and the newly spawned fish return to Europe—without their parents—on a three-year journey. Salmon of the Pacific Ocean are born in the headwaters of rivers and streams that empty into the Pacific. When sufficiently grown, they follow these rivers toward the ocean, where they go out to sea for several years. Then at the proper time, they return by migration back to the little stream where they were born.

Many species of birds migrate hundreds, even thousands of miles. The Arctic tern summers in the Arctic and winters in the Antarctic. Its round trip covers over 18,000 miles, probably the longest migratory flight. The tiny German warbler leaves by itself in the fall and flies to the southern part of Europe, continuing south until it reaches its goal in southern Africa. In the spring it returns northward to Germany.

God, who directs the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, will guide you too. Use the tools God has given you to find direction—pray, read, seek wise counsel and think through your problems with pen and paper. You can travel all the miles of life knowing where you are going, and being sure to arrive at your eternal destination. *Eighth in a series on Genesis*

Ken Peterson is pastor of the First Mennonite Church, 379 N. Campus Ave., Box 338, Upland, CA 91786.

Choices were tough 30 years ago too

Bernie Wiebe

I graduated from high school in 1953. After a six-week crash summer school, I became a "permit" teacher. Eight grades in a one-room rural Manitoba school.

Different times for sure. Teachers were in such short supply that some of us were almost begged to teach immediately after grade 12.

The '50s were supposedly a golden decade for Canadian youth. World War II—the war to end all wars—was over and the United Nations looked like a secure hedge for peace. Military families were reunited and a baby boom followed. Our GNP kept growing even in peacetime, partly due to the greater opportunities for leisure and partly due to involvement in rebuilding the war-devastated countries. We had goals to live for and fun in pursuing them. A common slogan then, "Life is a bowl of cherries," did not seem inappropriate.

Jobs were abundant, especially for those who got an education. A bachelor's degree in almost any field was an instant ticket to success.

Ah, but *there* was the rub for some of us. *To get an education.*

My roots lie in the first wave of Russian immigrants to Canada in the late 19th century. Many of these people came to Canada to avoid the inroads "secular" education was making into the villages of southern Russia. The urging from the country to learn the native language, along with other ways of integrating Mennonite village life with Russian country life, struck fear into many hearts.

Much of the fear at that time was possibly based on ignorance. At least most of the progressive Mennonites in Russia thought so. When delegates came back from exploring land in the United States and Canada with reports of frontier opportunities, the conservatives immigrated by the thousands. And the most conservative went to Manitoba among the snow and mosquitoes. Here land was cheap and the government generous in assuring private privileges for Mennonites to do their own thing.

While most of the progressives stayed in Russia, there was diversity even among those who came to Manitoba. Some soon wanted to build a high school and Bible school; others were too suspicious of education.

What remains of the "school" my father attended

My family tree was among the resisters. In my teens it was acceptable to attend school until age 14. Many on this memorable birthday came to school in the morning but ended their formal education that afternoon. (Even in my first year of teaching, I had a boy who did precisely that.)

I am number 10 of 12 siblings. The nine older ones had quit with the eighth grade or at age 14. My mind was firmly set. Education was an adventure that enthralled me and—if there was the slightest chance—my prayer (I had in my early adolescence made a commitment to Christ at a revival meeting in a neighboring community) was to continue that adventure. But I also felt a debt to my parents.

This was my home classroom for 10 years, the last two as a correspondence student—Alt-Bergthal.

When I questioned my father, he asked if I wanted to study because I was "too lazy to work." He gave no encouragement but did not stop my enrolling in high school correspondence courses. After two years of that, he remarked, "I get the feeling you won't quit." And he gave me his blessing to attend the Mennonite boarding school for the rest of high school ("I will help you borrow the money but expect you to pay it back").

That was a major decision for him and for me. It started a path which I enjoyed and where I found God's Spirit ready to assist when my ignorance and blundering were simply inadequate.

It wasn't difficult to get into teaching. And it even seemed my father came to feel good about having a teacher in the family.

But after four years of teaching (by then also married for two years), I felt God's Spirit leading me into full-time Christian ministries. It was difficult to tell my father, but I finally did so.

As I expected, his first reaction was totally negative. "Why not be satisfied for a change? Isn't teaching a good vocation? How will you possibly earn a living for your family while serving as a minister?"

I had questions too. "Lord, why not leave me alone? I enjoy teaching and we have started a Sunday school in this community. Some of the kids are even coming to Bible camp."

God's call continued and we went. My father overcame his fears and during my seminary years loved to discuss theology and anything else new that I was ready to talk about.

No, the problem then was not one of jobs. We who came from the conservative Mennonite villages usually chose from a limited range (like teaching, nursing, medicine or clerical) even after education.

Today's challenges, in the expanded world where jobs become obsolete yearly and career changes must be anticipated by all, are new.

But there is assurance. God, who helped us in our challenges 30 years ago, is equally willing and able to guide in today's tough choices.

Give your firstfruits to the Lord

Darrel H. King

God deserves the firstfruit in everything we do; it is all his.

About 10 years ago a company in Tennessee went out of business and ceased making chairs. At that time it was the most salable piece I had at the furniture store. I always thought that if I ever had the need, I would consider trying to make the chair. The only thing I did not like was the quality of materials used in the construction and I felt that the only way to make it was to do it right with quality materials. In September 1982 I told the Trinh family (a family of Vietnamese refugees who came to us 3½ years ago) that I thought we could make chairs. This would help them a lot since Son and Thien were laid off their jobs.

Four years ago I developed a health problem and in the winter I could not take the cold weather. As the weeks passed I started feeling worse and my breathing continued to get worse. At times I felt so bad that when I arrived at church I would go out in the car during Sunday school. Several times during the church service I almost had to leave.

Thanks to one special person from our church who talked to me and, when he couldn't do so personally, sent some caring people to Mentone (Ind.) to see me, I finally realized I had to do something about my health. I guess I must have looked terrible. Finally I told my wife, Mary Ann, that for a nickel I would go to the Cayloe-Nickle Clinic at Bluffton (Ind.) for a checkup.

On the morning of Nov. 27 I got some mail from Bluffton, thanks to Mary Ann. The letter told me to arrive at Bluffton Dec. 1 at 8 a.m. The next three days were spent there as a patient. On Dec. 3 I arrived home at 6:30 p.m. with medication for my ailments and I felt like working for the first time in four years.

Immediately I began working on the chair design and purchasing components and equipment. Everything seemed to go exceptionally well. When our son Herb came home from college for Christmas, we were ready to start cutting the lumber for chair frames. Son Trinh and our three sons, Herb, John and Phillip, cut pieces for 30 chairs.

Finally the springs arrived, and on Thursday evening, Jan. 6, the first chair was completed. On Friday we were upholstering other chairs when I was suddenly hit with the idea of giving the first chair to the church office. I consulted with Son, Thien and Mary Ann and was encouraged. Later that day I called Stan Yoder from our church, and he thought it was a good idea.

On Saturday I worried that some people would not understand why I wanted to give the first one to the church. I even wondered if it should be given during sharing time in the church worship service. I finally realized it was what God expects and commands us, to give him what belongs to him in the first place. Sunday during the sharing time I stumbled around the words but accomplished presentation of the first chair to the First Mennonite Church of Nappanee.

The following week was especially rewarding. Thien was called back to work, and we received verbal orders for chairs with the order of 30-50 chairs to be ready by June 5.

Our pastor, Robin LaRue, informed me the Thursday following the presentation that he had felt a better chair was needed in the office for his counseling appointments and that the new donation would perhaps help people to relax a little when they come to see him.

I know that if the church people pray and care for you, God's will is going to be done. A question I have now is what God's will is for each of us, but I don't have to worry. I'll let God decide.

I thank all the believers who cared for me and helped me find God's will.

Darrel H. King is a funeral director in Mentone, a small town in northern Indiana. He also is engaged in a small farming operation and is a member of the First Mennonite Church in Nappanee.

Delegates to triennial sessions take action on wid

Bethlehem, Pa.—Delegates to the triennial sessions of the General Conference Mennonite Church, held Aug. 1-7 at Lehigh University, took action on a wide range of domestic and international issues. The week of church-wide meetings was held jointly with the Mennonite Church General Assembly, which convenes every two years.

Nearly 7,000 participants, including adults, youth and children, crowded Lehigh's Main and Saucon Valley campuses for Bethlehem '83. Besides participating in both joint and denominational business sessions, conferees attended seminars, took part in tours and fellowshiped at special worship and Bible study events. Charles Christano, president of Mennonite World Conference, addressed the joint convention on two occasions.

General Conference delegates passed resolutions on the formation of a U.S. Assembly, tax withholding, human sexuality, Justice and the Christian Witness, Central America, U.S. and West German tricentennial celebrations and inter-Mennonite cooperation. All but the first two actions, which relate specifically to the ongoing agenda of the General Conference, were also endorsed by the Mennonite Church General Assembly.

Delegates from General Conference churches in the United States took additional action on the issues of handgun control and the stockpiling of surplus food by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Vern Preheim, Ivan Kauffmann and Jake Tilitzky listen to responses to the human sexuality statement.

Formation of a U.S. Assembly. In an effort to solve the decades-old dilemma of asking General Conference members from both Canada and the United States to deal with agenda and support programs that are primarily U.S. oriented, the General Board presented a proposal to a caucus of U.S. delegates on Aug. 1 for the formation of a national structure.

The plan, which calls for a meeting of U.S. delegates at each triennial conference, a yearly meeting of a U.S. Council and formation of a Commission on Home Ministries U.S., was quickly approved on the conference floor. Elmer Ediger of Newton, Kan., asked whether the name "U.S. Caucus" was too weak, too tentative. After a short discussion, it was agreed to call the new national structure the U.S. Assembly of General Conference Mennonites.

No sooner had the structure been officially created, when U.S. delegates passed their own resolutions on issues of national concern. Richard Willms of St. Louis presented an action on tighter control of handguns, calling on Mennonites to write to federal, state and local legislators, asking that the ownership and use of the weapons be restricted to police, the military and sporting organizations. "It is our belief that handguns are not necessary to the safety or constitutional rights of United States citizens," the statement said.

The second motion offered moral support to members of the Community for Creative Non-Violence and others in Kansas City, Mo., who were fasting to protest the mismanagement of surplus food by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The resolution further called on the U.S. government to release the food to the needy, while asking that a more efficient food distribution program be established. The Kansas City group broke their fast several days later.

Tax withholding. The General Board continued its reporting at the first full General Conference business session on Aug. 2. Following some housekeeping items and the welcoming of 26 new congregations into denominational membership, attorney Duane Heffelbower of Reedley, Calif., presented the background for a resolution authorizing conference officers to cease withholding taxes from the wages of employees who, for reasons of conscience, feel they cannot remit the full amount of their taxes because of inordinately high military expenditures by the government. Since all other administrative, legislative and judicial avenues for achieving a conscientious objector status from the collection of taxes had produced no results over the past four years, the GB proposed the conference begin to honor the consciences of employees who request that their full wages be paid to them. Such persons will then be personally responsible to the IRS for payment of their taxes. The move on the part of the conference to stop withholding taxes would, however, be a violation of U.S. tax law.

Following a lengthy animated debate during which no less than 22 speakers made arguments for or against the proposal, the resolution was approved by a ballot vote of 1,128 to 457. Heffelbower stated later that the action will probably take effect in September.

Human sexuality. For many delegates,

nge of issues

the most intense discussion at Bethlehem '83 came during the presentation and adoption of a progress report concerning a joint Mennonite Church/General Conference study on human sexuality. Despite the fact that the document for delegate consideration was a theological paper to be used as a basis for the second part of the study (to be titled "Sexual Expressions"), many conferees were more concerned with giving the sexuality study committee guidance concerning the content of the next phase of the study, rather than with the merits of the first part.

Uppermost in the minds of many was the treatment that the study would eventually give the subject of homosexuality. Vigorous debate on this point was assured by the presence at the convention of a number of representatives from the Brethren/Mennonite Council for Gay Concerns, a group based in Washington. Input from the gays was heard in a workshop and the council distributed literature on several occasions.

In the end, delegates gave assent to the first part of the study and will take up the discussion again, first in the congregational setting and then at the next round of church-wide meetings, after the committee has finished its draft of part two.

Other actions. In other business, General Conference delegates, together with their Mennonite Church counterparts, voted to accept the study on Justice and the Christian Witness, as well as resolutions on inter-Mennonite cooperation, Central America and the German tricentennial celebrations.

Members of the Justice and the Christian Witness study committee were commended repeatedly for their work in preparing a thorough, useful guide on individual and congregational applications of the biblical concepts of righteousness and shalom. Delegates ratified the study, adding amendments to broaden the document's scope and underline its continuing usefulness as a resource for determining faithful responses to opportunities for Christian witness for justice.

Andrew Shelly of Newton, Kan., suggested that the committee enlarge on various aspects of the document and submit the revised edition to General Board for ratification. Peter Ediger of Arvada, Colo., emphasized that the study "should be seen as a beginning, not a summary.

"We need to recognize our need for further growth and understanding, particularly as it could come from women, minorities and the Third World," Ediger said.

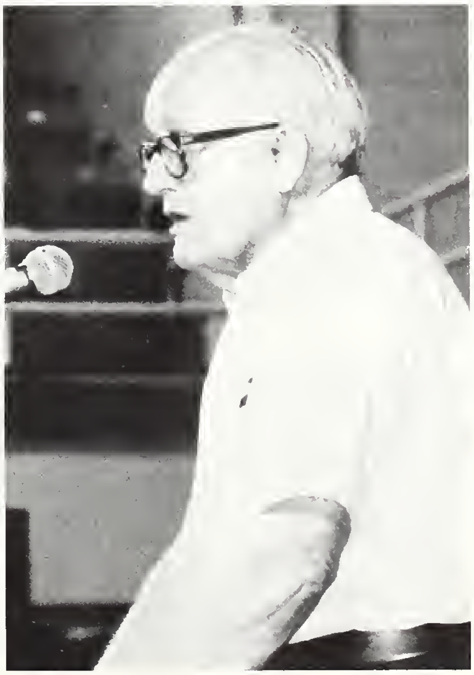
On the topic of Central America, delegates moved to "call upon the United States government to halt military aid to any government or counter-government group and declare and observe a policy of military non-intervention. We call upon the governments of the United States and Canada to actively encourage a negotiated settlement of the conflict in Central America."

The resolution also asks the Canadian government to raise the 2,000 per year limit on the number of government-sponsored refugees from Central America which are allowed to resettle in Canada each year. It concludes with a promise to "respond generously with relief, aid to refugees, development, evangelism and with our individual and congregational witness to the authorities."

Regarding the celebration orchestrated by President Reagan's Tricentennial Commission to commemorate the 300th anniversary of the coming of German settlers to America, the conference agreed to "encourage the United States to cultivate a new community of friendship among nations, not only with the people of Germany, but also with the peoples of other nations, including the Soviet Union. . . .

"With urgent voice we call for the United States to halt its deployment in Germany of the Pershing missiles aimed at the people of the Soviet Union," the resolution said. Part of the convention's concern with the tricentennial celebration was prompted by the irony of the fact that 34 Mennonites and Quakers were also aboard that first shipload of German immigrants to America.

Robert Kreider presents the resolution on the German tricentennial celebrations.



"The landing of the *Concord* in 1683 symbolizes a significant moment in the history of religious freedom and cultural pluralism on this continent. We are saddened to see, however, in this tricentennial event . . . the militarization of the Mennonite-Quaker story," the resolution states.

Besides celebrating the 300th anniversary of the coming of Mennonites to North America, Bethlehem '83 marked the first time that the Mennonite Church and General Conference Mennonite Church had held their church-wide assemblies jointly. According to a statement adopted by both bodies, cooperation between the two groups will continue, if not increase. In a closing resolution, the denominations committed themselves "to support congregations which have affiliated with more than one denomination, to encourage area conferences to seek additional ways of working together cooperatively, and to work intentionally and sensitively in programs and on issues of common concern."

Membership in the General Conference Mennonite Church numbers 65,000, while the Mennonite Church has nearly 100,000 member. *Larry Cornies*

Looking for more on Bethlehem '83?

Our next issue of *The Mennonite* (Sept. 13) will contain extensive reporting, analysis, commentary and photography from Bethlehem '83.

Watch for this special issue!

Sexual immorality and financial mismanagement are two perils that sometimes lead to the downfall of preachers, participants at an international conference for itinerant evangelists were cautioned. More than 4,000 evangelists from around the world attended the gathering at the Rai Conference Center in Amsterdam, Holland, sponsored by the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association (see story, below).

Nominations are being sought for the sixth annual Martin Luther King, Jr., Award, which will be presented in January 1984 to a person or group that is making a significant contribution to the non-violent struggle for a peaceful and just society. The Fellowship of Reconciliation orginated the award in 1979 to recognize unheralded people who are working in the tradition of Martin Luther King, Jr., and to address the concern that although King is revered as a national hero, the radical nature of his understanding and practice of non-violence is often overlooked. Send nominations to Marci Ameluxen, FOR, Box 271, Nyack, NY 10960, by Oct. 1.

Of those Canadians over 18, 36 percent had attended a church or synagogue in the preceding seven days, according to a poll conducted in May. Attendance was highest in the Atlantic provinces (53 percent) and lowest in British Columbia (21 percent). Also it was higher among Catholics (51 percent) than Protestants (21 percent). The poll also asked whether churches should speak out on political and social issues. Forty-one percent said yes and 50 percent preferred the churches to keep quiet.

Evangelists enthused by affirmations of Amsterdam conference

Amsterdam, Netherlands—Nearly 4,000 evangelists from 135 countries gathered in Amsterdam for the first International Conference for Itinerant Evangelists, July 12-21. Mennonite evangelists were among the participants invited by Billy Graham to worship, fellowship and learn around the biblical theme "Do the work of an evangelist."

The evangelists who gathered in Amsterdam were largely from the Third World (70 percent), had not attended previous international conferences (90 percent) and were often without formal education (50 percent). Of the more than 30 Mennonite evangelists in attendance, the majority also came from younger nations and represented nearly 20 countries and five continents.

"I consider this convention one of the high points of my life," commented itinerant evangelist George R. Brunk II of Harrisonburg, Va. "Rarely if ever have I been so moved, so deeply touched by the presence of the Spirit of God. It makes me wish I were 25 and could start all over again."

Mennonite evangelists met twice during the conference, once at the convention center and again at the historic Mennonite meetinghouse, Singelkerk, to dialogue with Dutch Mennonite church and mission leaders. There was stirring enthusiasm for itinerant evangelism in both meetings and a commitment to the recapturing of the Anabaptist vision for a vigorous and biblical evangelism.

"Who removed evangelism from Anabaptist?" queried Don Jacobs of the Mennonite Christian Leadership Foundation. "If evangelical and Anabaptist are not one and the same thing, then we have misunderstood our history and are in danger of becoming a people without a future."

Church planter and itinerant evangelist Myron Augsburger of Washington and professor and church planter Henry J. Schmidt of Fresno, Calif., both affirmed the wholistic understanding of evangelistic ministry as discussed in Amsterdam. In recent years Graham has helped lead evangelicals to a more decisive witness against the nuclear madness that threatens to destroy humankind along with the planet itself.

Mennonite evangelists at the Amsterdam conference were keen in their commitment to a church-centered evangelism. Perhaps congregations and districts should ordain and support itinerant evangelists, one participant suggested.

That commitment was echoed in one of

Billy Graham addresses more than 4,000 itinerant evangelists at Amsterdam '83.

A bill to allow people to "transfer a portion of their tax to a United Nations fund . . . for peace research" has been introduced into Canada's House of Commons by Jim Manly, a Member of Parliament from British Columbia. The portion would be calculated, he said, "by taking the percentage of the national budget allocated for defense, which is currently 8.8 percent." He explained that the proposal uses the historic principle of conscientious objection and applies it to money. "Though Manly's effort has been applauded," writes MCC Canada's Ottawa office, "private Member's bills are virtually never passed into law."

Wittenberg, East Germany—Participants from five nations engaged in a peace journey through Europe, post their own point of view—a "9.5 Theses for Peace"—on the same door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg where Martin Luther placed his historic theses in 1517 (left). The group of 21 young people—including members of the U.S. Lutheran Peace Fellowship—were on tour studying the strategy of the European peace movement.

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the official conference affirmations: "We are responsible to arrange for the spiritual care of those who come to faith under our ministry, to encourage them to identify with the local body of believers and seek to provide for the instruction of believers in witnessing to the gospel."

Although nearly 4,000 evangelists attended the Amsterdam conference, more than that number had to be turned away because of lack of space. Discussions are already in progress about a second conference for itinerant evangelists, in order to provide the encouragement and training of such an international gathering for some of the evangelists who could not be accommodated in Amsterdam.

George R. Brunk II (left center) and Myron Augsburger (right center) in conversation with colleagues

Mennonites at the conference discussed the possibility of an Anabaptist congress on evangelism, one that might bring together the several branches of the Anabaptist family tree—Brethren in Christ, Church of the Brethren, General Conference Mennonite, Mennonite Brethren and Mennonite Church.

"This has been a conference of tears," said evangelist and Bible teacher Glen Sell of Lancaster, Pa. "Tears of excitement about what God is doing and of renewal in commitment to the task of evangelism."

The itinerant evangelist is hardly a new breed. Rather, traveling evangelists have played an important role in the expansion of the Christian movement since Pentecost. Beginning with the apostles, who traveled in every direction telling the good news of Jesus and, especially with the great missionary Paul, planting churches, the Great Commission has fired disciples of Jesus with a nomadic vision for "the regions beyond."

Itinerant evangelists like Gregory Thaumaturgas in the Middle East, St. Boniface in central Europe and William Wade Harris in West Africa span the years since Christ and illustrate the cultural variety and evangelistic unity of the itinerant evangelist tradition. The signs and wonders that accompanied the preaching of the gospel, the unquenchable zeal to move on to where people have not heard, and a robust gospel of both personal and social dimensions—these have been the marks of the traveling evangelist since Jesus himself inaugurated the role of itinerant evangelist. *Nathan Showalter*

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The educational resources manager will report to the president of MEDA and be responsible for the development of educational resources (editing, writing) related to faith and economic issues and management of specific programs (convention, seminars) within MEDA's Domestic Division while also acting as a resource person for MEDA chapters.

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The proposed U.S. constitutional amendment permitting silent prayer in public schools would threaten religious liberty in the United States and tear down the wall separating church and state, according to the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith. The League made the assertion in testimony before the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee June 27.

A number of summer programs and special events were offered at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., this summer. Bethel's fourth annual music camp drew 86 students from seven states for the week-long affair. The Newton Community Theater held three productions on the Bethel campus in June and July. In July and August Bethel offered a computer camp for children in grades 3 through 8 in three two-week sessions. Bethel, in cooperation with Elderhostel, Inc., held an Elderhostel summer education program for senior adults. The prairie-related courses involved over 30 people. Basketball and volleyball camps were also offered.

The Mennonite Central Committee Polish Agricultural Visitor Exchange program has been suspended. SITR, the Polish organization that supplies agriculturists for PAVE, announced that they will not send any agriculturists to MCC this year and did not specify when the program would resume. Edgar Stoesz, who recently visited with leaders of SITR in Poland, speculated on reasons for the suspension: "The relationship between the United States and Poland is tenuous. There was also a significant number of participants who did not return as intended."

International flavor highlights Belize *Consulta*

Lombard, Ill. (MWC)—"Christo te necesita (Christ needs you)," urged the title of the song led by Mennonite musician Josue Erazo of Honduras. "Love everyone as brothers and sisters and do them good, regardless of their race or skin color, the language they speak or whether their ideas are different, whether they come from far away or live nearby."

About 40 delegates and visitors from eight different countries joined with the Mennonite congregation of Orange Walk Town, Belize, in singing that text (in Spanish) at the close of the 11th annual CAMCA (Consultation of Anabaptists and Mennonites in Central America) in Belize July 9. People in the congregation left their seats to exchange embraces during the singing.

"We had an international *Consulta*," summed up Teodoro Torres, president of the host conference, the Belize Evangelical Mennonite Church (BEMC). "This has been a week of great blessing."

Indeed, the 10 previous consultations have all been international, bringing together delegates from the nations of Guatemala, Belize, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica and Panama. All of these nations except Panama were again represented in Belize July 6-9. But the 1983 Consulta was even more international than usual, just as it was more intercultural, interracial and inter-Mennonite.

Part of the reason for that was the setting in Belize, with its multiplicity of Mennonite groups. Formerly British Honduras, the small country of about 145,000 can claim the highest percentage of Mennonites of any country in the world (about 5 percent).

Four German- and English-speaking Mennonites from the *Kleine Gemeinde* (Evangelical Mennonite Conference) colony of Spanish Lookout participated. In a manner reminiscent of the Soviet visitors at Wichita in 1978, the four bishops sang two songs in German during their reporting period.

Also participating freely were two younger men from the Evangelical Mennonite Mission Conference, which draws its membership from the conservative "Old Colony" in Belize (the latter did not participate). For these men, who could speak Spanish, the *Consulta* represented a first exposure (among other things) to a more exuberant style of worship and to such popular Spanish-language Mennonite resources as *Militantes para un Nuevo Mundo (Kingdom Citizens)* by John Driver.

Two Mennonites from the black-skinned Garifuna people and three from the Beachy Amish church in Belize added to the potpourri. Even within the Belize Evangelical Mennonite Church are both English-speaking and Spanish-speaking, black and Hispanic members.

Several Mennonite World Conference representatives were also in Belize in advance of their executive committee meeting in Honduras. Raul Rosado, MWC vice president for Latin America, came from Puerto Rico. Carl Brüsewitz, the Hague, Netherlands, presented an account of the church in the Soviet Union, after which Jesus Torres, vice president of the BEMC, presided in intercessory prayer for Christians there.

MWC executive secretary Paul N. Kraybill, Strasbourg, France, spoke to the assembly about Mennonites around the world. There were loud "amens" from the congregation when Kraybill said the Mennonite-related church in Ethiopia is thriving despite a government crackdown.

"Now we know how to pray for brothers and sisters around the world," came the responses to Kraybill's presentation. "Thank you for your message that we are not just a small group."

Rounding out the list of attendees from other nations was Juvenal Pacheco of the Evangelical Mennonite Church of Colombia. He brought greetings and expressed the interest of his conference in possibly having closer ties with the Central American Mennonite churches.

The international flavor of the *Consulta* was in addition to an already full schedule devoted to the theme of the Sermon on the Mount and to reports from each participating conference, of which there were at least 11.

James Sauder of Miami, Henry Helmuth of San Jose, Costa Rica, and Juan Vega of Guatemala City shared the main speaking assignments on the Sermon on the Mount.

Each day concluded with discussion, including response on the final day to the question "What does it mean to follow Christ in Central America today?"

Responses to that question were as diverse as the participants, who responded by country. Casting out demons and healing headed the list of the Garifuna Mennonites in Belize, and rejecting the temptation of the illicit wealth of marijuana growers was on the list of other members of the BEMC.

Several people emphasized the distance between church and state. Nicaraguan delegate Nicolas Largaespada answered, "Following Christ in Central America is the same as in any other country. Follow the Scriptures. Do not take sides (politically). Have a program of social services." His countryman Arnulfo Vado added that following Christ may mean suffering.

Jaime Prieto, a seminarian from San Jose, Costa Rica, answered in part by reading a Costa Rica newspaper article on social problems such as unemployment, cost of living, poverty and malnutrition. Acting like Jesus means "crying

For the first time a national poll has been conducted to determine what evangelical Christians believe about the nuclear arms race. The poll was commissioned by the National Association of Evangelicals and conducted by the Gallup Organization. According to the poll, 41 percent of evangelicals approve of President Reagan's handling of the nuclear arms race, 26 percent disapprove and 33 percent are undecided. Sixty percent of evangelicals said they favored a bilateral nuclear weapons freeze between the United States and the Soviet Union, while 18 percent were opposed and 22 percent had no opinion.

Mennonites in Brazil are translating and publishing *Disciples of Jesus* into the Portuguese language. Roseli Dyck is the translator. Associacao Evangelica Menonita, the legal umbrella for inter-Mennonite cooperation in Brazil, is overseeing the development of literature for ministry within the country. Some 3,000 copies of the new booklet will be printed. It is expected to be available by late 1983.

The U.S. poverty rate rose last year to 15 percent, the highest in 17 years, the U.S. Census Bureau reported recently. The number of Americans officially classified as poor increased by 2.6 million to 34.4 million in 1982 from 31.8 million in 1981. A family of four was classified as poor if it had cash income of less than $9,862.

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with those who weep," he said. This includes initiating changes in the lives of the poor and suffering.

Nationalism is strong in Honduras, said Juan Ochoa. We as Christians do not join *Amigos de la Patria* but rather we are *Amigos de Christo*, he said (not "friends of the state" but rather "friends of Christ"). We also reject a dualism that interprets following Christ only in individualistic, "spiritualized" ways, he said.

The question of what is "spiritualizing" the gospel was the unspoken question throughout much of the *Consulta*. What does Jesus mean when he says "the meek shall inherit the earth"? asked James Sauder at one point. One respondent brought up the example of Gandhi and his struggle in India; another contended that it was not an inheritance of material things that Jesus spoke of but "the best that this world offers." The apparent contradictions between these attitudes toward the material world were not pursued at this *Consulta*.

The reporting from the conferences consisted mainly of membership and evangelization statistics with an occasional glimpse of the volatile social climates in which the churches function.

Three church-run clinics have closed and the assignment of one missionary nurse terminated because the government is now building and managing clinics of its own, and there are "no new areas in which to expand," reported the "Fraternidad" of Nicaragua (related to the Evangelical Mennonite Conference of Canada).

The Costa Rica conference is experiencing some persecution, said David Villalta. He did not elaborate publicly, but later conversations revealed that there is concern in the Catholic-dominated country about the growth of evangelical churches, and thus some difficulty in building new church meetinghouses.

The delegates to CAMCA also transacted some business, at times in an atmosphere that was less than conducive to efficiency. Robert's Rules of Order vied with the neighbor's hammering, a driving rain on a tin roof, small flying insects, oppressive heat, fluctuating levels of leadership and the buzz of translation into English.

A constitution was approved for SEMILLA, a seminary-level training program for the CAMCA conferences. The board of directors, representing each country, was charged with appointing an interim director. Initial projections call for two 15-day regional seminars.

The participation of women in CAMCA had been an issue at the 10th *Consulta* in Nicaragua in 1982 and it was again in Belize. To the chagrin of some (particularly the delegates from Costa Rica), there were no women delegates, despite agreement in 1982 that at least one woman and one youth should be included in the five-member delegations from each conference (not all conferences sent five people).

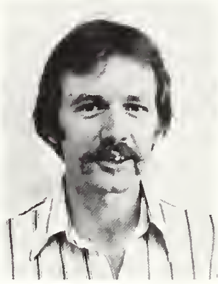
"Women are playing important roles in the church," asserted Janet Breneman of Honduras, an Eastern Board missionary who was the only woman to speak during any of the CAMCA meetings. "It is not good to leave them behind."

The 1984 *Consulta* will be held in Honduras. Panama might have been considered except for the absence of any delegate from the Panama church (an independent conference planted by Mennonite Brethren missionaries).
Bruce Leichty

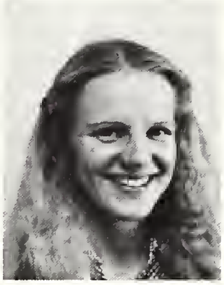
Delegates from Guatemala, Nicaragua and Colombia converse at the Belize Consulta.

RECORD

workers

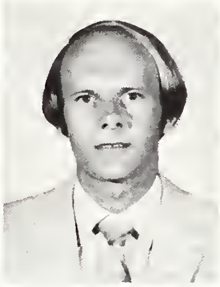


G. Claassen



J. Claassen

Claassen (left), Regehr



Fehr

Unrau

Weinbrenner

G. Wiebe

Stephen R. Clark has been named director of public information for Bluffton (Ohio) College. He will be responsible for the management and operation of the college's news service, publications, sports information and photography.

Gordon and *Jarna Claassen*, First Church, Berne, Ind., have been appointed as missionaries to Zaire under the Commission on Overseas Mission and Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission. The first year of their three-year term will involve administrative and support leadership in Kinshasa, as well as language study. Gordon served previously for three years under COM/AIMM in Zaire as a mechanic. He is a graduate of LeTourneau College and has studied at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Ind. His parents are Curt and Olga Claassen of Berne, Ind., former missionaries to India. Jarna comes from Finland and has served previously in Cyprus and England. She has also studied at AMBS. They leave Sept. 11.

John Fehr, a recent graduate of Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary, Fresno, Calif., and an earlier graduate of Fresno Pacific College, has been assigned to a four-year term as a COM missionary to Uruguay. He will assist local Mennonite churches in evangelism and church ministries.

Joyce Martens, Sterling Fellowship, Winnipeg, has begun a two-year voluntary service assignment with MCC as accounting assistant in the MCC Canada office in Winnipeg. A 1980 graduate of the College of New Caledonia, she is the daughter of David F. and Martha Martens of Burns Lake, B.C.

Laurie Voth Regehr and *Patrice Claassen*, Faith Church, Newton, Kan., will serve as youth workers for the Western District Conference, beginning Sept. 1. Each will serve a one-fourth-time position. They replace *Weldon* and *Jenny Harms Martens*, who will attend Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., after their three-year term ends Aug. 28.

Peter and *Sandra Reimer*, Gretna (Man.) Church and Grace Church, Regina, respectively, have begun a two-year voluntary service assignment in Winnipeg. Peter will serve at Rewarding Employment Skills Program Engaging Communal Tradition, and Sandra will serve at the Marymound Residential Treatment Centre. Their parents are Jacob and Maria Reimer of Gretna and Anton and Pauline Nickel of Regina.

Neil Unrau has begun a three-year term with Native Ministries of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada. He has been assigned to Manigotogan, Man., for one year, after which he will join the staff of Youth Opportunities Unlimited in the core area of Winnipeg. He has a bachelor's degree in zoology from the University of Manitoba and a master's degree in peace studies from AMBS. His parents are Peter and Mary Unrau of Lowe Farm, Man.

Ilene Weinbrenner, Alexanderwohl Church, Goessel, Kan., has begun a one-year term of voluntary service with Mennonite Board of Missions, Elkhart, Ind. She works as an assistant hostess at International Guest House in Washington. She attended Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., and Emporia (Kan.) State University. She is the daughter of Ella Weinbrenner of Goessel.

Daniel and *Lois Ann Wiebe*, Mount Royal Church, Saskatoon, have begun a two-year voluntary service assignment with MCC in the MCC Canada office in Winnipeg. Dan will serve as computer programmer; Lois begins as researcher/writer in the peace and social concerns office, with another assignment pending. Lois graduated from Swift Current (Sask.) Bible Institute in 1978. Dan graduated from Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg, in 1976 and received a bachelor's degree in computer science and philosophy from the University of Saskatchewan in 1980. Their parents are Peter and Helen Friesen and Jacob and Irene Wiebe, all of Saskatoon.

Gayle Wiebe has been appointed to the music faculty of Westgate Mennonite Collegiate, Winnipeg, beginning in September.

Leading minister needed

Lowe Farm (Man.) Bergthaler Mennonite Church, membership of 140, is looking for a leading minister. The church is located in a predominantly Mennonite farming community.

Direct inquiries to:
Randy Schroeder
Box 55
Lowe Farm, MB R0G 1E0.

Leading pastor wanted

Leading pastor
for
First Mennonite Church
Saskatoon
Membership: 385

For more information please inquire in confidence to:
Congregational chairman
c/o Ministerial Search Committee
First Mennonite Church
418 Queen St.
Saskatoon, SK S7K 0M3.

Peace plays

Swords Into Plowshares *by Ingrid Rogers (Brethren Press, 1983, 281 pages)*

Reviewed by Leann Toews, Route 2, Newton, KS 67114

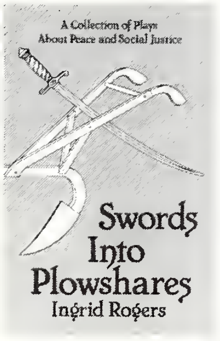
What section of any library is smaller than the drama resource section? At long last we have a good collection of plays to add to the shelf. When I serve as a drama resource leader I have people ask for a practical book of dramas suited for church. This book has suggestions for using drama in the church setting as well as actual plays written out of a biblical context.

This collection of plays about peace and social justice is set up in a practical format so that the lay person will be comfortable using it. The introductory section includes the theory of the book, history of the process for the book's birth and suggestions on how to use the plays.

The book has two parts: "Historical Peacemakers" and "Problems Facing Peacemakers Today." It should be clarified that these plays serve as well for other biblical themes, not just peace issues. The title of the book is perhaps too limiting for the wide range of subject matter that could be adapted. The two major parts of the book are divided into subtopics. Each play is prefaced by pertinent information for understanding its content and performance. Following each play is a set of discussion questions and follow-up exercises that include long-term involvement if desired.

The plays range in length from 1½ pages to full-length dramas. The weakness of the book is that the quality can vary greatly when so many different writings are put together. But there are more than enough creative pieces to warrant the purchase and use of the book. The plays included in the anthology are deliberately kept simple so that staging and costuming can be adapted to a church worship area, Sunday school room or sidewalk. Some of the plays are discussion starters only. You provide the resolution to the conflict set up. Others are complete, with the audience being a definite part of the action. Diverse groups can use the wide variety of plays in this collection for an extensive range of programs.

I agree with Rogers that drama should be used more in worship. It keeps us in touch with the stories of the Bible in a "real and tangible" way. Drama is exciting for children and teenagers who are often left out of our worship experiences. Last but most important, drama is an excellent and creative way to share Christ's message of peace and justice to the world.



Swords Into Plowshares provides a valuable resource for adding some refreshing and dramatic insights into our traditional patterns of worship.

A comparative theology

Islam and Christianity *by Badru D. Kateregga and David W. Shenk (Eerdmans, 1982, 208 pages)*

Reviewed by Roelf S. Kuitse, 602 S. Eighth St., Goshen, IN 46526

The writers of this book learned to know each other at the Kenyatta University College in Kenya. One was teaching Islamic history and theology, the other Christian history and theology. Their friendship and dialogue has resulted in a book about the main tenets of the Islamic and Christian religions. They call it "a comparative theology."

In the first part of the book, Kateregga interprets, in 12 chapters, the Islamic faith. He deals with subjects like the belief in Allah—creator, sustainer and judge of the world, the books of Allah, the prophet of Allah—Muhammad, the seal of the prophets and the Islamic community in its worship and mission. Each chapter is followed by a "Christian response" written by Shenk.

The same pattern is followed in the second part of the book. The Christian partner in the dialogue writes in 12 chapters about the same subjects from a Christian point of view: God, the revelation of God in history, Jesus the Messiah, and the church in conduct, worship and mission.

The chapters "Jesus the Messiah" and "Salvation" touch subjects on which Muslims and Christians have totally different views. These differences become clear in the "Muslim response" to these chapters.

The writers have done an important service to all those who want to get clear information about the things that unite and separate Muslims and Christians. This book can help us to get rid of the deformed images we have of each other's faith. It can help us to discover the real issues at stake in the encounter between Islam and Christianity.

Church and state in South Africa

Perceptions of Apartheid, *by Ernie Regehr (Herald Press, 1979, 304 pages)*

Reviewed by Irving Hexham, Department of Religion, University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, MB R3T 2N2

Sponsored by the Mennonite Central Committee in 1974, Ernie Regehr spent two years writing and researching in southern Africa. The result is this book. It is a useful introduction to both South African history and the growing conflict between church and state in South Africa.

The book is divided into three sections. In the first, Regehr deals with a number of events. He begins with the Soweto revolt, which is placed in its social context by a discussion of South Africa's racial laws. Against this background he discusses the role of the church in South Africa and recent conflicts between church and state. In the second section Regehr gives a short but valuable history of southern Africa. This section concludes with a discussion of the role of Calvinism in Afrikaner politics and the development of black nationalism.

Section three looks in more detail at the relationship between various South African churches and the state from 1960 to the present. The book ends with a discussion of violence and non-violence as political options in South Africa. Regehr points out the dilemmas faced by Christians in this situation. He emphasizes the complicated nature of the discussion and the role of violence in maintaining the state. Finally, he appeals for Christians in South Africa to opt for a non-violent solution through a sustained effort to implement Christian principles and justice in South Africa.

The great strength of this book is the large number of facts and figures which Regehr has condensed into a relatively short text. Its major weakness is his dependence upon English language sources and general lack of sympathy for Afrikaners. Nevertheless, this is a valuable book which deserves to be widely read.

For no other
foundation can any one
lay than that which is laid,
which is Jesus Christ.
1 Corinthians 3:11

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Write or call **your** Resource Person or the Commission on Education.

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LETTERS

Mrs. Estep is my niece

I am among those who read the back page first.

Some time ago you quoted W. R. Estep as follows: "Those who hold slaves are no better than the Turks" from *The Anabaptist Story*, giving the page. I looked it up and there it was. I have the book, given to me by Bill (W. R. Estep) and Edna, who is my niece. You may be interested to know that he was in Europe lately on a Reformation study tour and was the main lecturer on the tour. I do not know how often he goes, but he has been there before. They live in Fort Worth, Texas. Please excuse my shaky writing. I am recovering from a case of pneumonia. I am 93. Wishing you God's blessing in your work. *Lydia Amstutz, 13129 Hackett Rd., Orrville, OH 44667*

July 4

Uniqueness of Mennonites

Some time ago you spoke (I don't remember whether in an editorial or in an article) briefly of the uniqueness of Mennonites. Then I read an article about that time by another writer also mentioning something along the same line, so that I do not now remember which of you made which statements. As I recall, one of you said that Mennonites were really not Catholic or Protestant. A few other statements were made to the effect that Mennonites were quite different from mainline Protestants. Could you, in the near future, clarify this for those of us who are not so well versed in Mennonitism?

In other words, besides the historic peace stand, not taking an oath (theoretically at least) and living the simple life, how is the total stand and milieu of Mennonitism different from mainline Protestantism? *Margaret I. Regier, 1107-9th St. –33, Greeley, CO 80631*

July 7

Editor's note: The best adequate response is probably in Walter Klaassen's book Anabaptism: Neither Catholic nor Protestant *(1973, Conrad Press, Waterloo, ON N2L 3G6). Among other things, the Anabaptists were probably more radical in following the teachings of the Bible than were either the Catholics or Protestants of that time. Another key concept was that of accepting believers who differed with their beliefs even as they tried to demonstrate a better way. Instead of killing or persecuting anyone who dared differ with their beliefs, the Anabaptists showed Christian tolerance.*

Seeking a child

This letter may strike you as a bit unusual, but it is written in all sincerity.

First, thank you for the excellent articles in *The Mennonite.*

We attend First Mennonite Church in Lima, Ohio, and it was suggested to us to write you with our plea.

The article on "Wanting the Unwanted" was excellent and we hope it helped people start thinking and acting to save these poor little children that I'm sure are wanted somewhere.

My husband and I have gone through three unsuccessful pregnancies. We went through quite an ordeal the last time, when I got as far as seven months, only to learn again something had gone wrong and I needed immediate surgery. After the last time, 18 months ago, my doctor suggested adoption. Since that time, right in the hospital, we have been working to find just the right connection that the Lord would bring us, that will bring us our child.

We've contacted over 200 private agencies in Ohio alone, and 50-75 agencies, some church related, outside the state. So far we've come close several times, but at the last minute the mother has decided to keep the baby or there have been great amounts of money asked for. We have faith in our Lord, and we know that this waiting time is for a purpose. But it gets hard sometimes.

Our pastor is our number one reference. Also we are close friends with the president of Bluffton College, Elmer Neufeld, and he and his wife are willing to speak for us.

We completed our home study and were Probate Court approved in September 1982. Now the hard part—finding an available child.

Of course we prefer an infant, since this will be our first child, but we are willing to openheartedly accept whatever child the Good Lord brings us.

Our biggest and most sincere desire is to adopt a child. We are willing to speak to anyone who might know of an "unwanted" pregnancy or newborn or youngster. We pray that if you know of a child available, you will please write to us and allow the Lord to have his way with all our hearts. Write us in care of Box 5002, Lima, OH 45802.

July 13

Editor's note: Names are withheld at the couple's request. But they are willing to write to anyone who can help. They will provide doctor's references. Let's pray and seek together.

Not getting the *The Mennonite*

I ordered *The Mennonite* through the Every Home Plan last September. Sally Dyck was our contact person. I have not received one copy of *The Mennonite* so far.

I have phoned the post office a number of times and they of course tell me that all mail is going out.

My only other plan is to ask you to send it to our daughter in town. It seems town mail is better serviced (unless you did not receive my order with Sally Dyck's order). *Helen Enns, Sealy Road, Route 3, Kelowna, BC V1Y 7K2*

July 15

Editor's note: Not too many things hurt an editor more than to know some people who really want to get The Mennonite *are not getting it. Somewhere there must be an error. We are checking our records and hope you will soon be receiving your copy.*

Paper bricks

As the person in charge of the MCC Appropriate Technology Program in Guatemala, I would appreciate response to the following question from readers.

From my previous job in Holland, I remember a colleague mentioning something about a Canadian way of making "paper bricks." Since we don't find easily in Guatemala a way to use old papers (like selling them for recycling), I would like to know more about this. Before starting my own experiment, I'd like to learn from others' experiences.

This is what I remember: (1) Make a tightened roll of paper and bind it with wire, (2) put this roll under water for a certain time, (3) take the wet roll out and dry it, (4) take the wire off and it will appear that the roll has become quite porous, fine for burning in the fire.

If any of the (Canadian?) readers know anything more about this process, please write their suggestions to my address. We want to do some work on this technique, even though we realize the problem of fuel for burning is much larger than can be solved by recycling newspapers. *Jacob Schiere, Comite Central Menonita, Apartado 1779, Ciudad de Guatemala, Guatemala*

Aug. 4

The pulpit and pews

Christopher Arney

Very late one night, when the church was dark, in the quiet sanctuary there was a noise. Only the pulpit heard it. You see, the pulpit, high up on the platform, always heard and saw everything that went on in the sanctuary.

So slight was this noise that another might have missed it. The pulpit glared accusingly at the object that had dared break the silence.

The noise came from a pew—the one right up front. On that pew the pastor had left his Bible—opened to 2 Timothy. And the noise was that pew straining in the light of the moon to see the text. Slowly and quietly the pew read, "And for this reason I remind you to kindle afresh the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands. For God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of power and love and discipline. Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord."

"Ssshhh," said the pulpit.

"Oh," came the startled reply, "I'm sorry, but I just had to read it. It gets so lonely up here and I long to be able to share with someone the comfort of my bench."

"Silly pew," interrupted the pulpit. "Your job is to stay put to look nice and clean. You are to be straight and rigid and bolted in place, and you are to be quiet."

"No," said the pew, now a little bolder. "I don't believe that anymore. I think Jesus wants me to be free to serve and minister wherever he leads."

Then, just as the pulpit was going to really put the pew in its place, there was another noise, another small sound, but it struck fear deep into the wooden heart of the pulpit. The noise went "ping."

"No!" shouted the pulpit. It woke all the other pews with a start; one even dropped its hymnals.

The pews wondered, What could put such fear into a pulpit? Then there were three more pings. The pulpit stared aghast, for one pew—that front one—having broken its screws, had begun to move. "I want to go to the back of the sanctuary where I can greet people as they come in. I want to be a place where people can rest and share with each other what God is doing in their lives." And she proceeded down the aisle to the door.

The other pews looked at each other nervously, and then, in a quavering voice, a back pew said, "I want to minister too. . . . It's so far from the cross here; I've always just felt like a spectator. I yearn to be where people may come and kneel and use me to pray for God's forgiveness and healing and love and direction." There was a "ping, ping, pinging" as that pew began to move up the aisle toward the cross.

By this time the pulpit was yanking its microphone wires out by their roots. Seeking to restore order before it was too late, it bellowed, "Get back in your row. Who do you think you are anyway to make such decisions for yourself? What will people say?"

But the pew kept coming. And the deacons' chairs (which the pulpit had always thought were too fanatical) began to sing, "Come to the cross, come to the cross."

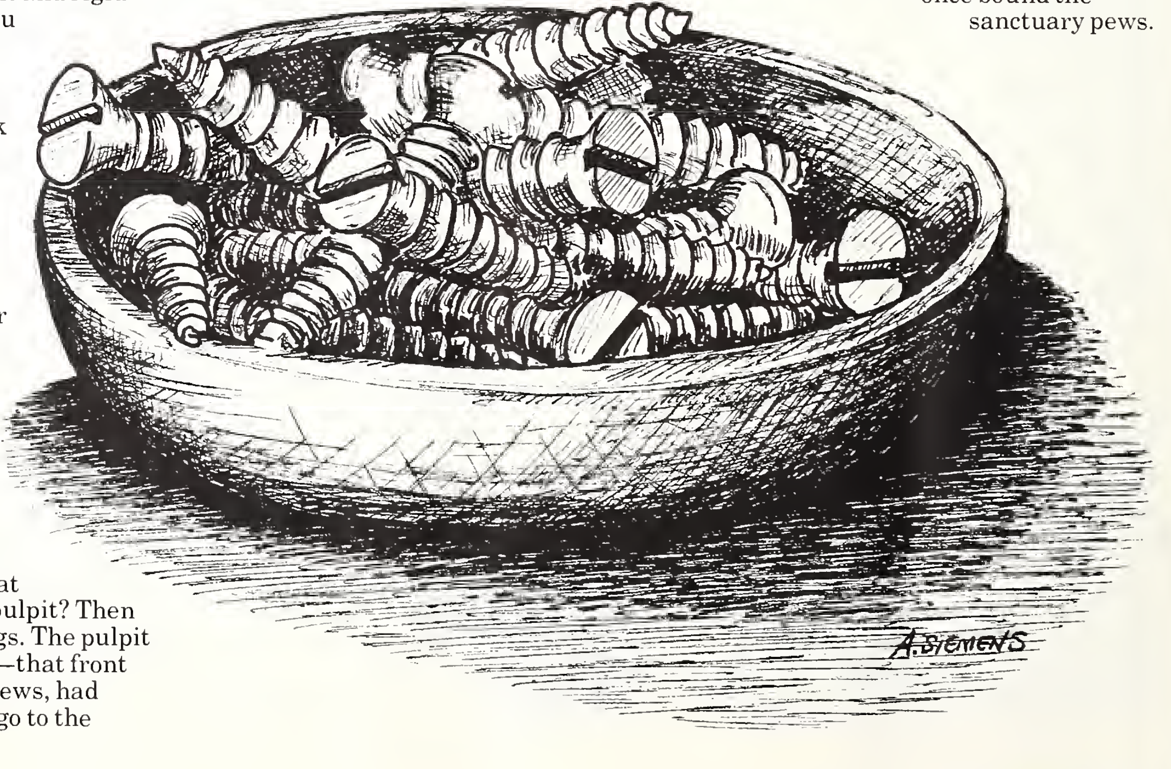
The pulpit sincerely hoped the worst was over, but it wasn't. For behind it, the altar table, in its gentle golden tones, spoke up.

"I am the table upon which the body of Christ is broken. I am a symbol of the living presence of Jesus Christ. As the tabernacle was in the midst of Israel's tribes, as Jesus was in the midst of his disciples, so should I too be among the believers. Every time people see me, they will remember that Jesus is with them."

The pulpit, with a lump in the throat of its microphone, sullenly watched the altar move down the steps among the pews. Fully overcome, the pews shouted alleluias and sang to the Lord. The pulpit could only hear that terrible noise—the ping, ping, pinging of screws undone, of pews unshackled to minister.

As light began to creep into the sanctuary, silence reigned. Everything was moved, everything was changed. Except the pulpit. It was exactly where it had been for the past 15 years.

The story doesn't quite end there. That morning, when the pastor came in, there was on the altar an offering bowl, and in it, given as if in offering, were the screws that had once bound the sanctuary pews.



What is the German tricentennial about?

William Keeney

A West German demonstrator is carried off the Ramstein U.S. Air Force Base on Aug. 7.

Almost 300 years ago, on Oct. 6, 1683, 13 Quaker-Mennonite and Mennonite families arrived in the United States. They came from Krefeld, Germany, and settled in Germantown on the northwest side of Philadelphia. That became the first permanent settlement of Mennonites in America. It was also the beginning of German migrations. The German immigrants became numerous enough in the early colonies that for a time it was touch and go as to whether German or English would become the primary language spoken in the newly independent United States.

Mennonites were not the only German immigrants to the "new world," as it was often called. Many others came for reasons of religious liberty, similar to the Mennonites. The Church of the Brethren migrated almost in total from Germany to the United States.

In my introductory classes at Kent State University I have students engage in a family history of violence and conflict exercise. They are asked to trace their family histories back as far as they can. They are to look particularly for the experiences of conflict and violence and their effects positively and negatively on their family.

Many of them are surprised, and I was also at first, that so many of them found that a reason for their ancestors migrating was to escape conscription and militarism on the European continent. Some have even found they have deserters from the army among their forebears, especially among those who migrated in the 19th century. They came to the United States because it had no compulsory conscription.

To celebrate the coming of German migrants to the United States, President Reagan has appointed a German-American Tricentennial Commission to plan observances of the first arrivals. The climax is to come on Oct. 6—the date of the arrival of the Mennonites and Quaker-Mennonites—with a banquet in Philadelphia.

The Commission is chaired by Richard V. Allen, formerly Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs. Other members of the commission come largely from corporation executives, military related people and government officials who have some connection with military policy or program. One example is Traule Grether, a first-generation German immigrant whose father is a missile scientist.

No member of the commission represents the spiritual and moral heritage of the first group. Out of that first group came the first public protest against slavery when the German immigrants admonished their English Quaker compatriots against holding of slaves.

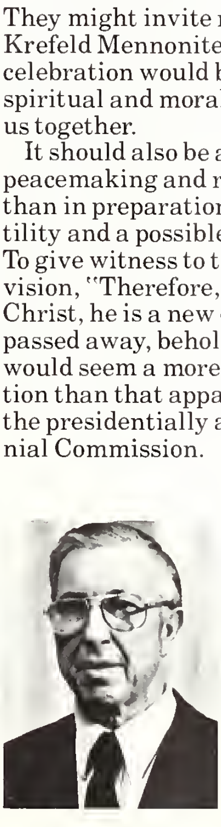
In the announcement of the commission and the plans for celebration of the tricentennial no mention is made of the fact that the group who arrived as the first wave and a substantial number of other German immigrants in the 18th and 19th centuries were religious pacifists. Others wanted to escape the compulsory military conscription that came in the wake of the Napoleonic period. Prior to that time the modern forms of universal military conscription—including peacetime conscription—were unknown in European nations, but became common afterwards.

It is ironic that a major purpose of the planned celebrations will be focused largely on fostering better relations between the United States and Germany. They have faltered because of the growing U.S. militarization and the pressure on Germany to follow along with it. The deployment of the Pershing II and cruise missiles has given rise to large-scale protests in Germany. The United States also pressures Germany to enter more deeply into opposition to the Soviet-Eastern European bloc.

This past year the Krefeld Mennonite Church in Germany invited former MCC workers to come for a celebration of their renewal after the destruction of World War II. MCC workers had engaged in programs of food and clothing distribution in and around Krefeld.

Would it not be appropriate for Mennonites—possibly joined by the Church of the Brethren and the Friends—to organize an alternative celebration in Germantown on Oct. 6? They might invite representatives of the Krefeld Mennonite Church to come. The celebration would be of the historical, spiritual and moral heritage that binds us together.

It should also be a call to engage in peacemaking and reconciliation, rather than in preparation for warmaking, hostility and a possible nuclear holocaust. To give witness to the 2 Corinthians 5:17 vision, "Therefore, if any one is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, behold, the new has come," would seem a more appropriate celebration than that apparently planned by the presidentially appointed Tricentennial Commission.



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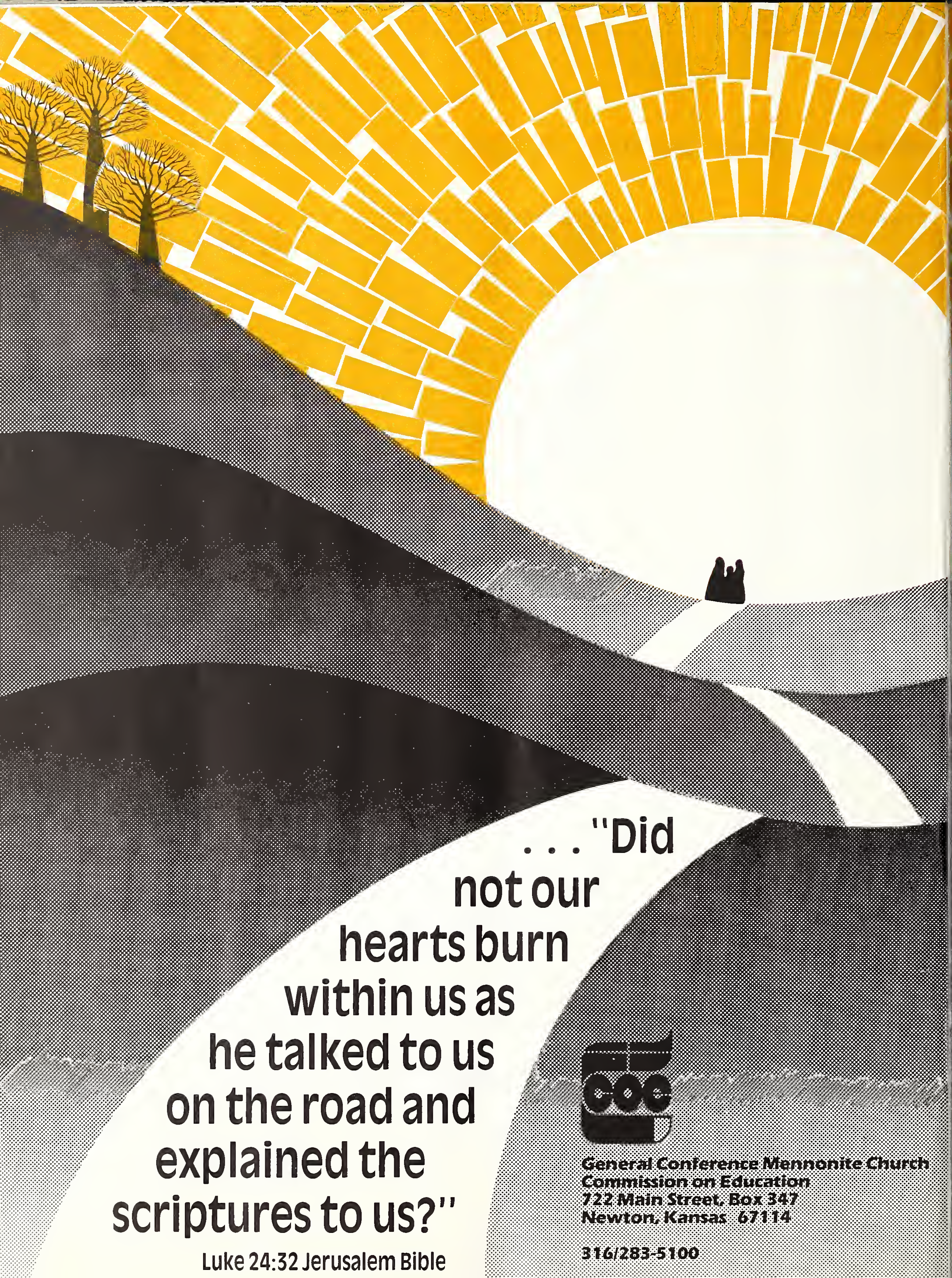

. . . "Did
not our
hearts burn
within us as
he talked to us
on the road and
explained the
scriptures to us?"

Luke 24:32 Jerusalem Bible

General Conference Mennonite Church
Commission on Education
722 Main Street, Box 347
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MEDITATION

Spilling and filling

"Oh, no!" I said in dismay as I watched the white liquid seeping slowly over the placemat. Trickling down the leg of the table it spread to a pool on the floor.

My 10-year-old, Andrew, looked up sheepishly. He had asked me to pass the special Danish cheese and was proceeding to take a rather liberal piece. Waving the container in the air, he had accidentally knocked over a full glass of milk.

Sighing, I rose wearily from my chair at the opposite end of the table. Disc trouble in my back had caused much discomfort that morning, bending would cause more distress. Wasting milk at the present high cost irritated me also. However, I knew he needed it, so I poured another glass.

Mopping up necessitated three or four trips to the sink. Finishing, I sat down, a heavy silence between us.

Finally, Andrew hesitantly said, "Are you mad at me, Mom?"

"No," I said, "It was an accident, but I'll put the cheese away so it won't bother us anymore."

With obvious relief, he grinned and our "pals atmosphere" returned. Enthusiastically he chatted on, "When I grow up and get rich and famous, I'll buy you a whole ton of Danish cheese!"

Reflecting on the incident following his return to school, I thought of the verse I had read that morning.

"Hast thou not known? Hast thou not heard that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? There is no searching of his understanding."

How often my heavenly Father, in answer to my prayer song, had filled my cup and made me whole. Yet in my greed and selfishness I bungled, spilling the cup. How thankful I am that instead of meeting the situation with an attitude of weariness, as I did with my son, I can count on his forgiveness. He makes me whole again and refills my cup.

Laura M. Hall

Thank you for teaching

Dear God our Father, it has been an emotional week. Thank you for being in the midst of us. We have needed and felt your presence. Our hearts are bursting with so many things which need sharing. We have been overwhelmed by the love and kindness of family and friends, and we thank and praise you for them. We are thankful that we are all together.

We thank you for things we realize that we never thanked you enough for — sight, the ability to walk, the energy of a 3-year-old, the smile of a baby.

Thank you for the lessons of this week. It is our todays that we need to share with those we love — make time for friends, do what needs to be done, say what should be said and have a renewed care for the preciousness of life. Not out of dread for our tomorrows but because of fulfilling the promise of what today can hold.

It is with gladness, then, that we come before you today to praise you for your goodness and thank you for your protective care. Amen.

(Prayer shared in church several years ago after a head-on collision accident involving Lois, her husband and their two sons.)

Lois Bauman Wetherill

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The fragile employment situation these last few years is bringing us a reminder. Is God's gift to us mainly that of a job or is it a calling? If it is a calling, then we need to look afresh at our world. It revolves too much around work. Somehow we need to learn a better balance between our doing and our being.

Hopefully this issue can help us as we seek God's will and gifts in our lives.

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EDITORIAL

Our cornerstone is OK

Over 7,000 people (including youth, children and volunteers) participated daily in the joint Mennonite Church/ General Conference Bethlehem '83 sessions Aug. 1-7. The GC portion was larger in proportion to membership (66,000 GC, 97,000 MC). This was largely due to our choosing delegates directly from congregations while the Mennonite Church chooses delegates from its 22 conferences.

Two emotional and spiritual highs stand out for me.

Toward the end of Monday's joint opening, I had already stowed my camera and notepad, thinking the action was over. Then Jake Tilitzky, GC president, held up a roughly-hewn stone as a symbol of the General Conference. Though rough and rugged, he pronounced, we were "tough."

Ross Bender, MC moderator, hauled out a larger stone to represent the Mennonite Church. He said that one quality of that stone was that "it can be cut away without splitting."

The two leaders placed these stones before the session. My spirit said, "You too are built upon the foundation laid by the apostles and prophets, the cornerstone being Christ Jesus himself. He is the one who holds the whole building together and makes it grow into a sacred temple of the Lord" (Ephesians 2:20-21 TEV).

In the several discussions of the "Statement on Inter-Mennonite Cooperation in North America," jointly prepared and approved by the GC and MC General Boards as a resolution for each body, there was generally support for this motion. But there were some sincere reservations. I thought it might be radically amended. Then an MC pastor who had left the General Conference several decades ago to serve in the Mennonite Church said there had been a time when he thought one conference might be the cream and the other the skim milk. But today he was convinced that the two have grown into a beautifully homogenized product, equally committed to serving Jesus Christ.

My spirit recalled Luke 19. The Pharisees had requested Jesus to keep his disciples quiet. Jesus said, "If they keep quiet . . . the stones . . . will shout" (19:40 TEV). And as in the opening imagery of the cornerstone I felt the reality of our together being "living stones" (1 Peter 2:5).

GCs and MCs do have a sure cornerstone—Jesus Christ.

Of course, our building task is not complete. There are some stones of stumbling. One such stone was evident in the GC vote authorizing our head office to no longer withhold taxes (i.e. not be a tax collector for the government) from employees who request this action. While 1,128 voted in favor, 457 opposed this motion. That could mean that over 12,000 GCs (457 X 30) are against this decision.

I can think of few better ways to show our commitment to peacemaking than to seek out these dissenters and personally listen to them. We must do this if we truly are peacemakers.

The foundation is sure. Our cornerstone is Jesus Christ. We are laying down some beautiful "living" stones. But there is some cement, some grouting, some stones, some masonry that needs sincere attention immediately. Let's tend to this so we can continue the larger building. *Bernie Wiebe*

A worship session at Bethlehem '83

THE MENNONITE

OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST 98:19 SEPTEMBER 13, 1983

Bethlehem '83: celebrating Christ the Cornerstone

SEP 13 '83

At the opening ceremonies of Bethlehem '83, General Conference president Jake Tilitzky (left) and outgoing Mennonite Church moderator Ross Bender symbolically place stones representing their churches together atop a single cornerstone.

(Clockwise from above) Alan Gehman, who is developmentally disabled, reads Scripture; George Wiebe leads congregational singing as lyrics are signed for the deaf; GC and MC delegates mingle over snacks in an atmosphere that resembles a county fair.

BETHLEHEM '83

Signpost on a church odyssey

Larry Cornies

The scene was reminiscent of a biblical story: Thousands of pilgrims from near and far, snaking their way around hills toward a common destination. Sojourners motivated by a recognition that this, in a sense, was also their "birthplace." Babies in parents' arms. Registration lines. Children running about together, playing tag or hide-and-seek. Wrinkled faces that had seen many such gatherings and feet that moved more slowly than most others. For some, finding lodging was a primary concern.

Those who came to Bethlehem, Pa., that first day of conference week, Aug. 1-7, brought with them a wide assortment of goals and expectations. Some came to celebrate the 300th anniversary of the coming of Mennonites to North America. Others intended to speak their peace on topics like handguns, homosexuality, war taxes, Central America, women's concerns and justice. Many came to be reunited with kinfolk, both biological and spiritual, and together worship "Christ the Cornerstone." Still others came simply to revel in the country carnival atmosphere that hung like

(Clockwise from left) Special speakers Henry Schmidt, Fresno, Calif., and Charles Christano, Kudus, Indonesia, address the convention; the Hesston College Players respond to an evening presentation with a vaudeville-type routine.

fog around the circus-style tents, long rows of displays, concession stands and picnic tables. Most who attended will remember a rich mixture of all these elements.

Although commemoration of history was one of Bethlehem '83's primary rallying points, the convention made some significant historical marks of its own. For the first time, the General Conference's Triennial Sessions and the Mennonite Church's General Assembly were conducted at the same place, at the same time. Though most denominational business sessions alternated inside Lehigh University's chilly, expansive Stabler Arena, the two churches held a full day of joint business meetings. They gathered as a single congregation for Bible study in the morning and worship in the evening.

At the joint opening ceremonies, outgoing Mennonite Church moderator Ross Bender predicted that "by the year 2000, we will no longer be two groups, but one." Jake Tilitzky, General Conference president, echoed the sentiment by proclaiming, "If ever we have needed each other, it is now."

The week was fertile with symbolism and talk of unity, commonality and togetherness. Bender and Tilitzky set the tone when, during a dialogue sermon, they shrank the gap between their two pulpits by moving them toward each other. Then with a single cornerstone as a base, they placed two stones representing their respective church groups on a small table before the assembly (see cover). That symbolic act was, for many, one of the highlights of the convention.

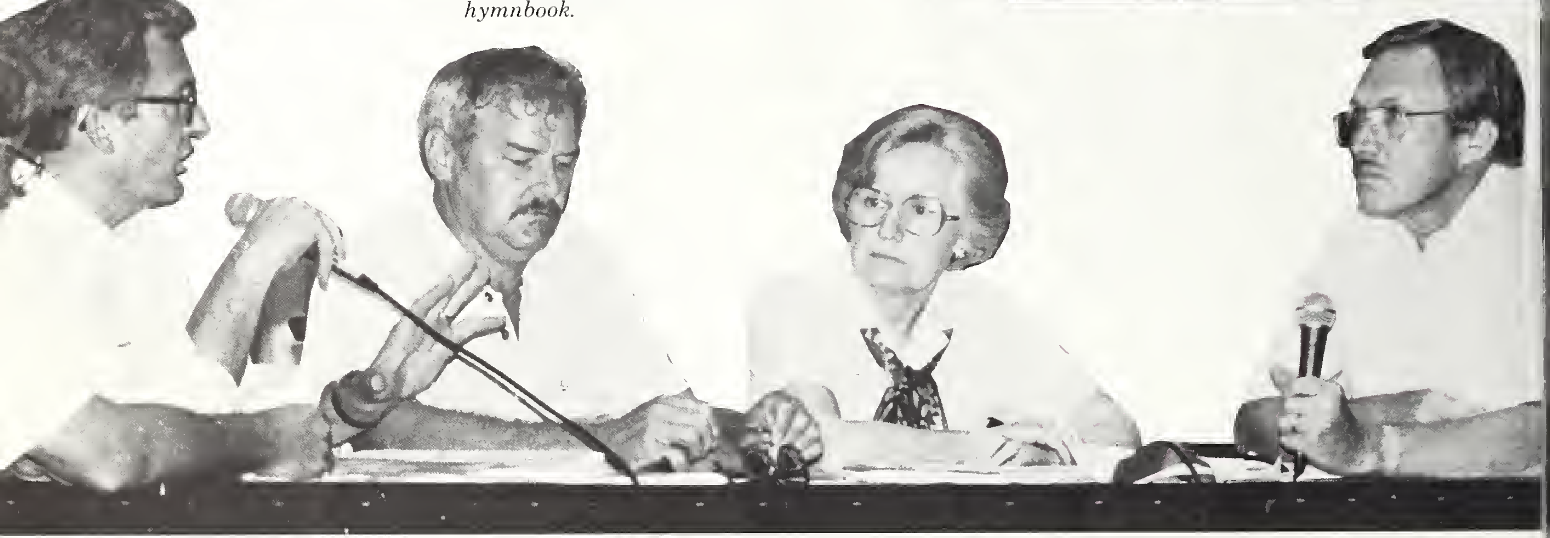
Later in the week, Charles Christano of Kudus, Indonesia, president of Mennonite World Conference, acknowledged that "in Bethlehem '83, we have a vision to become a people of God. If we lose that vision, we lose the heritage of being his people." During the final worship service on Sunday morning, Christano added, "We came to Bethlehem '83 not because we expected to see a baby in a manger, but because we celebrate the fact that Christ is coming again. If we bring anything away from Bethlehem '83, it is that we have a calling to be a better people, a more faithful people."

Convention participants heard similar appeals from other speakers throughout the week. Addressing the theme "Covenant Renewal" on Wednesday evening, evangelist Henry Schmidt of Fresno, Calif., called for renewal in the pursuit of godliness and holiness, a renewed perspective on the nature of humanity—its dignity as well as profanity, a renewed sense of mission and a renewed lifestyle, by which the disciplined community can also become a discipling community.

The concept of lifestyle and its relationship to love for others was the theme of a special multimedia worship service on Saturday night.

Inter-Mennonite relationships and understanding grew almost visibly ("You know, I can't tell who's GC and who's MC," was a common discovery) as members of both groups worshiped, studied, attended seminars, took part in tours, ate and lived together. A resolution affirming the growth of inter-Mennonite cooperation got powerful support from both assemblies, although MC moder-

(Clockwise from below) Members of the Commission on Home Ministries present a skit on the need for a U.S. Assembly; Jim Gingerich and Jake Tilitzky become "honorary Hispanics"; Jim and Barbara Voth of Paso Robles, Calif., listen to singing from the new Cheyenne hymnbook.



ator-elect Myron Augsburger cautioned delegates to maintain a "gracious spirit" toward those who felt less than comfortable with the statement. About a dozen delegates opposed the resolution.

Bethlehem was an important convention for other reasons too. Whereas almost any General Conference churchwide meeting since 1860 might be seen as "historic" in one way or another, the 1983 Triennial Sessions may take on special significance depending on how delegate actions eventually work out. Resolutions on creation of a U.S. Assembly and tax withholding will be the most far-reaching.

The first was adopted during a special caucus of delegates from U.S. churches on the afternoon of Aug. 1, before the convention's official opening. Such gatherings had been held before, most recently at Estes Park in 1980. At that time, the caucus took little interest in establishing its own national structure, despite the strong feelings on the part of some Canadians that the U.S. districts needed some forum for handling agenda which was primarily stateside in nature.

This time it was different. After some reporting from the Commission on Home Ministries on projects related especially to U.S. churches, such as Hispanic ministries, Mennonite Indian Leaders Council and efforts in the area of draft registration, delegates approved a U.S. structure in fairly short order. The only adjustments made to the elaborate proposal brought to the caucus by the General Board, which included establishment of a U.S. Council (to meet yearly) and a CHM U.S., were in the name of the new body.

"The word 'caucus' sounds too weak, too tentative," said Elmer Ediger of North Newton, Kan. "It really means a meeting prior to something else. That's not what we are." Ediger suggested that the word "assembly" be used instead. Kenneth Neufeld of Hillsboro, Kan., agreed and made the amendment. A few minutes later, the U.S. Assembly of General Conference Mennonites was born.

The new structure wasted no time in passing several resolutions on U.S. issues, including handguns and surplus food storage (see Aug. 30 issue, p. 418).

It seemed ironic that when the U.S. Assembly proposal came before the entire General Conference the next day, it was the Canadians that kept emphasizing the need for binational cooperation. "What the U.S. delegates have done is the right decision," said Conference of Mennonites in Canada chairperson Jake Fransen of Vineland, Ont., "but this is not a fork in the road. We do not want to separate as a people. . . ."

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Responses to the creation of a U.S. Assembly

Jake Fransen, chairperson, Conference of Mennonites in Canada

Originally I was opposed to the idea and vowed when I became chairperson of the CMC that I would not support such a move. But I soon became aware that others who had worked in General Conference structures longer felt that something needed to be done.

I see the formation as only a first, minimal step that will need to be reviewed at the next triennium. The main purpose should be to work on issues that relate to Washington.

I'm sad to see Indian work and Hispanic ministries be withdrawn from the total conference agenda. But for now perhaps this is best.

Palmer Becker, pastor of Peace Mennonite Church, Richmond, B.C.

I'm glad that we now have some structures to deal with strictly national agenda, but I hope we do not do separately anything that can be done together. I would like to see Native Ministries move toward becoming part of Mennonite Indian Leaders Council, and I believe we need a binational Chinese council.

It seems to me that most church planting, service and witness work should be done at a congregational or a provincial, state or district level with coordination or facilitation on a binational level.

Don Steelberg, chairperson of the Commission on Home Ministries

I'm pleased. It's a direction that I've supported for some time, one that's needed for U.S. members to take responsibility for issues of a U.S. nature.

I hope it will not be just a bureaucratic change but will bring a new sense of mission and vision to U.S. churches.

(Left to right) Leroy Kennel leads a workshop on "Mennonites and Politics"; one workshop on women in church leadership was closed to men; H. A. and Ethel Fast, who attended their first General Conference during their honeymoon in 1923.

Frank Isaac of Winnipeg sounded similarly concerned. "This almost has the appearance of our parting with our U.S. friends, even while we're in the midst of joining hands with the MCs," he said. "We want to take some small steps to accommodate separate agenda items but not lose our identity as one church." Ratification by the entire conference followed.

Presentation of the resolution on tax withholding was up next. Jim Gingerich of Moundridge, Kan., chairperson of the conference's judicial action committee, reported that the suit against the IRS approved at Estes Park was, in the opinion of constitutional lawyer William Ball, almost certain to fail. Little progress was being made on the legislative or administrative fronts either. In light of this, the General Board was recommending that the conference honor the consciences of its employees who request that their full salaries be paid to them, allowing the employees themselves to remit to the IRS what their consciences would allow.

After Robert Hull, secretary for peace and justice, had reviewed the experiences of other groups which had attempted similar actions, Duane Heffelbower of Reedley, Calif., outlined the points of the resolution in detail and spoke of their possible ramifications. "We could scarcely devise a softer velvet glove to cast at the feet of the IRS," he said. "But the action does show our corporate willingness to stand beside our employees. What will the government do? We don't know."

What followed was probably the most vigorous interchange of viewpoints by GC delegates of the entire week. Nearly two dozen speakers took their turns at the mikes before the vote was called for. Viewpoints on the resolution ran the gamut from disassociation with it to praising God for it.

"We believe that the Bible says we ought to pay our taxes. We want to be separated from and not have any part of this action," said Paul Goossen, Wayland, Iowa.

"This resolution is creating an impossible situation for our government," added John Voth of Meno, Okla. "We

Bethlehem '83 registration

Adults	4,227
GC	1,469
MC	2,410
Dual	259
Youth	2,225
GC	514
MC	1,618
Dual	93
Children	650

Comparisons with past conferences

St. Catharines—1974	1,277
Bluffton—1977	2,050
Estes Park—1980	2,455
Bethlehem—1983	2,335

Encore! say General Boards

Bethlehem '83 received high marks in an inter-Mennonite evaluation Aug. 7-8 at Allentown (Pa.) College.

The Mennonite Church and General Conference General Boards, meeting with Brethren in Christ and Mennonite Brethren representatives, praised the weeklong event in another first-of-its-kind session held hours after the assembly closed.

GC board member Ben Sprunger said he felt "a sense of wholeness" at the Aug. 1-7 gathering. "If there would be some way [to hold another joint MC/GC assembly] I would be the first to vote for it."

Robert Zehr of the Mennonite Church board "found it difficult to contain my emotions" during the assembly's concluding communion service. "I could have cried tears of joy."

Brethren in Christ representative Frank Kipe felt "a beautiful spirit of oneness among you" at the sessions he attended.

MC board member Luke Stoltzfus said he would like to see the two denominations meet again in 1989 when their assembly schedules next coincide, "if not before." But he cautioned both bodies to listen to the concerns of those members who "are not at that point."

Several participants suggested that the Mennonite Brethren and Brethren in Christ join the GC and MC groups in a future assembly.

Mennonite Brethren moderator Henry Dick noted a schedule problem. The MB triennial calendar—with assemblies in 1984, 1987 and so on—never coincides with the MC and GC calendars. Thus, a special meeting would be necessary.

"But I'm not saying that isn't a possibility," he said. "I'm more interested in that today than I would have been a week ago."

Brethren in Christ representative John Byers noted a similarity in issues facing denominations in the Mennonite family: "I sensed that you struggle with the same sorts of things on your conference floors that we do in ours."

Dick agreed but said that "if unity means uniformity" it isn't likely to occur. If conference differences are becoming less important, differences of outlook have the potential to divide Mennonites and Brethren in Christ in new ways, he said. As for overcoming historical differences, "many times it will take our young people, our children, who don't understand the things that divided us," Kipe said.

Myron Augsburger, incoming MC moderator, said that a meeting of the four largest groups in the Mennonite family would require a site like the Wichita convention center used for the Mennonite World Conference assembly in 1978.

Criticism of the assembly centered on response to the joint report on sexuality. Ross Bender, outgoing MC moderator, "was very disappointed" that delegates addressed themselves almost exclusively to the sections of the report that deal with homosexuality.

Further, Bender reported that homosexuals at Bethlehem felt "hated" rather than accepted as people. One can respect the humanity of homosexuals without condoning their activities, he suggested.

"I know that homosexuality is not contagious. People could have talked with them without catching it." On the other hand, "Christian love *is* contagious."

Don Steelberg noted that "mutual discernment on the homosexuality issue was absolutely impossible." He suggested that a setting for study of Scripture related to the issue be provided at a future assembly.

On other matters, MC staff member Joy Lovett reported that some Canadians at the youth assembly felt "very misunderstood" by young people from the United States. Perhaps future youth conventions should offer seminars on Canadian concerns, said Lovett, who is associate general secretary for black concerns. *Dave Graybill*

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have emphasized that we love our enemy. I wonder whether the government has become our enemy. Have we adopted the same big-stick approach that we so often have criticized?"

Others, however, urged the conference to push ahead with the proposed action. "Mennonites took a stand against slavery even though it was unpopular," said Mark Winslow, Allentown, Pa. "Today, the nuclear arms race is the primary social sin of our day. We should take a stand regardless of the fact that it may be unpopular."

Lois Barrett, Wichita, Kan., observed that "in the U.S., disobeying the law is the time-honored way of changing the law," noting that the cause of civil rights in the 1960s was advanced primarily through civil disobedience.

H. A. Fast of North Newton, Kan., prompted the only round of applause during the lengthy discussion. "We refuse our selves in service, but we say nothing about our taxes," Fast said. "I have said to the government, 'You can't take my body to fight a war.' I have said, 'You can't take my son.' And now I am saying, 'You can't take my money, either.' "

When it was over and the ballots counted, the resolution passed by a 70 percent majority.

One of the characteristic features of the discussion on tax withholding, as well as other debates during the week, was the sensitivity and willingness to listen with which delegates approached the microphones. Several told of how they had come to the convention ready to vote one way, but were now moved to vote another. Phrases such as "I want to respect your point of view. . ." or "I'm willing to learn more. . ." preceded many of the speeches. And the tough debates of Bethlehem, during which emotions ran high and convictions deep, never seemed to overshadow the determination by participants to celebrate their common identity, their peoplehood, their unity. After the convention, many attributed that prevailing unity to the moving of the Spirit.

In terms of joint MC/GC business, the debate on the human sexuality committee's study document sapped most of the delegate energy.

The committee had prepared a paper titled "What the Bible Says About Sexuality" for discussion at Bethlehem. It was intended to serve as the theological basis for the second part of the statement on Human Sexuality in the Christian Life, which would be titled "Sexual Expressions." Debate was to center on the merits or weakness of part one.

It was not to be. The paper catapulted dozens of conferees directly into discussion about the legitimacy or illegitimacy of various expressions of sexuality. Dominant among these was the issue of homosexuality. Despite the aforestated purpose of the discussion time and continued reminders from the chair that the committee was looking for assistance on refining the first part of the study at this point, arguments for and against recognition of homosexuality as an acceptable sexual orientation, let alone expression, flooded the conference floor.

For some participants, the presence of gays at the convention might have been a factor in their preoccupation with the

(Clockwise from left) Dramatic presentation by the Hesston College Players; editor Gerhard Ens, Anna Juhnke and Ken Loewen report for Der Bote*; Joleen Siebert, Reedley, Calif., appeals to delegates for openness in relating to homosexuals; a hallway serves as ballot-counting headquarters for a tellers committee; Dwight, Janet and baby Daniel Regier of Newton, Kan., were among the hundreds who made Bethlehem '83 a family affair.*

issue. The Brethren/Mennonite Council on Gay Concerns, a group based in Washington, maintained a visibility unprecedented in either of the two Mennonite assemblies. Representatives of the council took part in seminars and displayed literature at the human sexuality information tables. The latter was a compromise achieved only after some conferees were angered by BMC's setting up of their own display, permission for which they had secured from the human sexuality study committee partway through the conference. The accord reached between BMC and the intervening church executives also included permission for an additional seminar on the topic, which was well attended.

In the end, both MCs and GCs approved the study's first part and instructed the committee to proceed with part two. Yet the shortage of responses aimed directly at part one was the major miscarriage of Bethlehem '83, and left the committee with little but frustration over its last two years of work, coupled with trepidations about its next two. The joint General Boards, meeting the day after the convention, expressed similar disappointments (see p. 438).

Meanwhile, the inter-Mennonite committee which had prepared the *Justice and the Christian Witness* study guide basked in comparative tranquillity. Responses here were highly affirmative, while delegates underlined the importance of making the study a tool of ongoing importance in churches.

"This study comes close to what I would consider a 'classic,' and I want to thank the committee for its gift to the church," said Ron Kennel of Wellman, Iowa. Others challenged the committee to modify the booklet in the area of assisting churches in putting their witness into practice. "The implementing resolution doesn't go far enough," said Palmer Becker of Richmond, B.C. "We need to include some implementing actions—suggestions on how we can move forward in bringing justice in more active ways."

Here again, both groups endorsed the study. Other measures passed jointly included resolutions on Central America and the German-American tricentennial (see Aug. 30 issue, p. 419).

While adults at Bethlehem went about their business, study and worship, more than 2,200 youth held their own gathering at Lehigh University's Main Campus, over the mountain from the Saucon Valley Campus (see pp. 442-443). Hundreds of children were shuttled to nearby Cedar Crest College for their daily activities (see p. 446). Dozens of preschoolers were cared for in and around Stabler Arena.

Considering the complexity of the planning required, the thousands of people who had to be lodged, transported and fed, and the mammoth task faced by members of both Mennonite groups in the eastern Pennsylvania region who served as convention hosts, Bethlehem '83 was a resounding organizational success.

Was it as successful at meeting the issues and challenges of its time? The next five to 10 years will tell the tale.

Bethlehem '83 was no Schleitheim. But if Bender's prediction comes true, it will be a significant signpost in the ongoing odyssey of the Mennonite church.

An outlander's view of the General Conference a

Daniel Hertzler

It began with the rapping of a gavel and the declaration by President Jake Tilitzky that the General Conference was in session. As a regular attendant at the Mennonite Church General Assembly, it would be inevitable that in viewing the business sessions of the General Conference I would compare what they do with what goes on in the MC assemblies.

I had been told that the GC style was more confrontational than ours; that in their Triennial (every three years) Sessions they let their disagreements hang out when we are more inclined to mute them. That could be, but I did not observe it at the Bethlehem assembly.

The business time of both churches was constricted because of the joint assembly. They took turns with the space in the Stabler Arena at Lehigh University. But then the time ran short and concurrent business sessions were required. So the delegate body of the Mennonite Church found other quarters since, although the church is larger, the delegate body is smaller. This is because the General Conference is an organization of congregations, and each congregation has direct representation to the Triennial Sessions. In addition, proxy voting is permitted on the basis of one vote per 30 members in a congregation. Thus the total number of votes on a specific issue could approximate 1,500.

A major part of the first delegate session was the presentation of 26 congregations which had applied for membership. Each had representation present and some brought banners. After all were presented, they were accepted as members by the delegates rising and reaching out toward them. This brought the number of congregations in the General Conference to 352 and the membership to 65,640. There was a net gain of 2,507 members in the past three years.

The most intensive early discussion in these business sessions came with the presentation of an issue which had been on the General Conference burner for several triennia. The problem was precipitated by paid employees of the General Conference in the United States who asked that their federal income taxes not be deducted by the conference to allow them to deal directly with the government on the question of taxes for war preparation.

The discussion I heard came at the end of a long process and so I suppose it was less impassioned than earlier in the study. The reason for the delay, I learned, was in order to pursue all possible administrative and legal avenues as a solution to the problem. This had now been done with no success and so the General Board brought a resolution calling for "the conference officers to test the constitutionality of the withholding requirements in the United States and to assert the higher claim of Christ's law of love, by refusing to serve as tax collectors in cases where individual employees have asked that their federal income taxes not be withheld from their wages, in order that they may conscientiously refuse to pay for war preparations."

The resolution was discussed in a vigorous and orderly fashion. The arguments for and against were scarcely new ones.

After an hour's debate, the resolution was brought to a ballot vote and passed by approximately a 70-percent majority.

Nothing this pointed came to the GC delegates during the rest of Bethlehem '83. Instead, the delegates listened to reports, discussed, made motions and voted alternatively. At the end of the week I asked myself what was the cumulative impact? Several hundred people spent parts of five days in meetings. What did they accomplish?

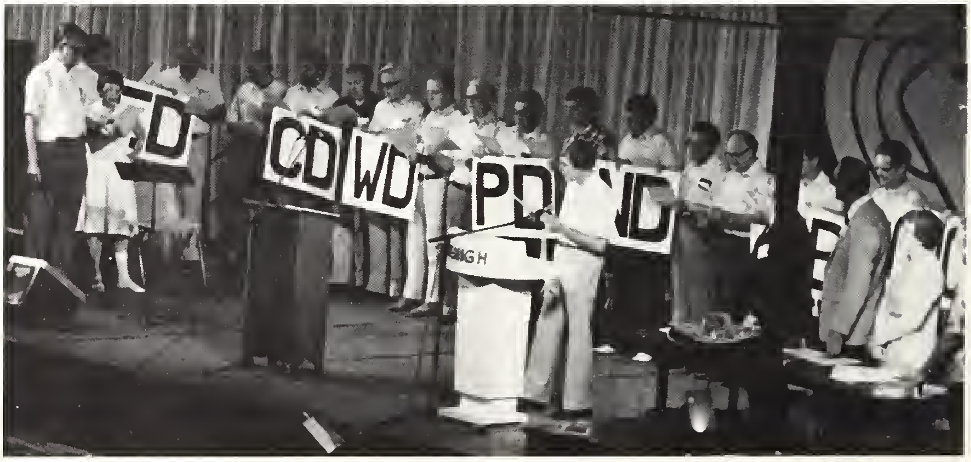
1. **They heard reports** from their denominational agencies. Church organizations normally follow a modified corporate model. Each institutionalized activity has a board or commission to guide its work, but the churchwide assemblies are seen as the bodies for final review. As an employee of a church board myself, I observe that although these reviews generally tend toward one-way communication, the integrity of our system calls for them. The delegates to the General Conference sat patiently through hours of reporting and most responses were affirmative.

Listening to these reviews, I observed a whole set of organizational titles with which I was not entirely familiar. Functions similar to those carried out by the Mennonite Church are done by the General Conference under different headings and combinations. As a member of the Mennonite Church I am familiar with its acronyms: MBE, MBCM, MBM, MMA, MPB. As an observer of the General Conference business sessions I needed to come to terms with COE (Commission on Education), COM (Commission on Overseas Mission) and CHM (Commission on Home Ministries).

I found also that the General Conference organization is in certain respects more integrated than ours. There is a Division of Administration which prepares a budget for all of the above plus Mennonite Biblical Seminary. The seminary, on the other hand, in contrast to our own colleges and seminaries, is an organization apart from any of the commissions.

All of these reports were given with

Pastors from across Canada and the U.S. assist in the ministerial leadership report.



usiness

vigor—and some with special effects—and received with reasonable interest. Most of what was presented was what would be expected, but there were occasional surprises. COM, for example, featured Humberto Flores from the Baptist Seminary in Cochabamba, Bolivia. He addressed delegates in good English and summarized the issues facing Latin American churches (see p. 452).

Another surprise was the CHM proposal to place 50 Anabaptist witness points in cities across North America during the next three years. In their proposal they asked, "Is it time to launch a serious effort to find at least 300 self-supporting people in 1983-86 willing to pursue their vocations and form inter-Mennonite congregations at the same time in whatever location their witness is needed?"

With this and other proposals this commission alone came up with a price tag calling for $200,000 per year above what they are now receiving. Included among the proposals was a plan to look for 500 people who are ready to give $100 as often as twice a year for support of these new congregations in their need for facilities.

2. They "processed" recommendations. In addition to the resolution on the withholding of taxes, the General Conference delegates responded to at least three other resolutions and two joint committee reports: a Mennonite tricentennial resolution, a resolution on Central America, a statement on inter-Mennonite cooperation in North America, the report of the joint study committee on *Justice and the Christian Witness* and Human Sexuality in the Christian Life, Part I. These resolutions and reports were also processed by the Mennonite Church, and most were first presented in joint sessions of the two delegate bodies.

Discussion of these documents gave delegates a chance to speak their minds on matters they considered important, and a number did. But as happens in a delegate body of several hundred, relatively few people spoke a number of times and a good many were not heard from. Nevertheless some contrasting points of view came forth with others that sought to pull the contrasts together. Among the latter was a remark from Ruben Siemens of Saskatchewan, who called for placing the statement on justice beside a statement on evangelism adopted three years before in an effort to have a combined emphasis.

My mind sometimes wanders during discussions by delegate groups, especially when the discussion drops to the level of public editing of documents. Yet, on reflection, I believe there is a place for statements on Christian doctrine and practice. Many ignore them, and some fail to understand them, but specific statements, like confessions of faith, may become rallying points in our search to put our beliefs into language suitable for the day.

I am confident that we in the church borrow our models for activity from the patterns of our time. The General Conference Mennonites at business—like most Protestant churches—use a pattern that is partly based on political and partly based on business patterns. No doubt there are theological and pragmatic considerations also. However, if we are to judge their efforts on strictly political or business bases, their work may be found wanting. Meeting only once every three years, they are together too infrequently and not long enough to keep on top of their agenda. Too much of the work is done by staff people and special committees.

Yet we need not use business or political models alone to evaluate what we seek to do in the church. It is our conviction that when Christians come together to discuss the work of the Lord, the Lord himself is present in the form of the Holy Spirit. This is a mystery we should not try too hard to explain. But we should be alert, for as the writer of the Revelation put it: "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the churches" (2:7a).

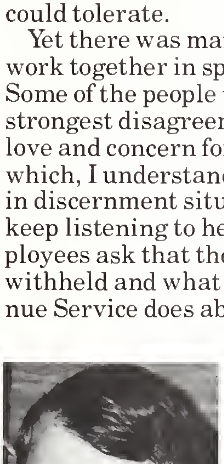
3. They followed *Robert's Rules*. I tend to be easy-going on the use of formalized rules in conducting the work of the church. Indeed in the Mennonite Church General Assembly we have gone through a period when "consensus" was considered adequate or even preferable to formal motions, seconds and votes. More recently we have become more formal.

In the General Conference it was clearly formal. President Jake Tilitzky announced at the beginning that they would follow *Robert's Rules* and that, in case of questions, an interpreter of the rules was provided for. So I found myself witness to not only motions and seconds and amendments to motions but in at least one case, an amendment to the amendment. It got pretty complex, but it certainly was one way to keep the meeting orderly.

In addition to observing these sessions, I attended the Mennonite Church business sessions except when they overlapped with those of the General Conference. Though there were diversities of emphasis and differences in style, much that happened was common to both groups. Except for the separate moderators and different organizational titles, a stranger would have had difficulty knowing which meeting he was attending. Especially since in both assemblies were members of congregations which belong to both the GCMC and the MC.

So what have I learned from the General Conference at business? That they take business seriously, surely. That their pattern of congregational representation to the Triennial Sessions provides a more direct tie between people and the general church than we can match. That there are disagreements among the General Conference members possibly more marked than we could tolerate.

Yet there was manifest an intention to work together in spite of disagreements. Some of the people who expressed the strongest disagreements affirmed their love and concern for the assembly which, I understand, is what Christians in discernment situations must do. I will keep listening to hear how many employees ask that their taxes not be withheld and what the Internal Revenue Service does about it.



Daniel Hertzler is editor of Gospel Herald, *616 Walnut Ave., Scottdale, PA 15683.*

Varied experiences reported at North American M

Carmen Schrock

"Adults should be aware that this is not a lost generation. There's a great bunch of kids here that will be instrumental in the church's future. I think they've got what it takes," said Wanda Wagler of Tavistock, Ont., as she reflected on her week as a dorm counselor for youth at Bethlehem '83.

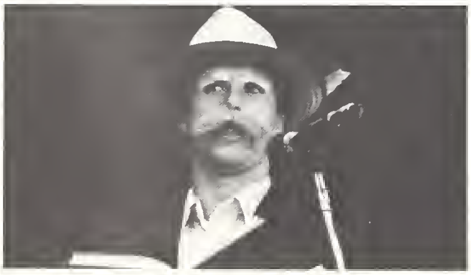
After raising money through bike-a-thons, car washes, bake sales, chili suppers, rock-a-thons and other creative means, General Conference and Mennonite Church youth traveled by bike, car, van, bus, plane and train to Bethlehem for the first joint North American Mennonite Youth Gathering. Over 2,200 youth (1,618 MC, 514 GC and 93 dual conference) and their sponsors met at the scenic Lehigh University campus, over the mountain from the 4,227 adults who were meeting simultaneously at Saucon campus's Stabler Arena.

While conference planners had hoped for a more integrated program between youth and adults, the logistics of the distance between the campuses led to separate, concurrent programming. Two joint worship services were held, and shuttle buses ran throughout the week for those participating in both programs.

Arnold Fast, co-moderator for the week, pointed out that the youth gathering was probably "the climax of most people's summers." And the youth responded with enthusiasm. Kay Goertzen from Newton, Kan., called the week "a mountaintop experience because of the people."

Throughout the week creative programming and a high-energy crowd contributed to lively, spirited mass meetings. Doug Krehbiel and Jude Krehbiel (not related) of Road Less Travelled led music while the youth proved that they not only love to sing but are capable of singing a wide variety of expressive songs. Selections ranged from the "Ping-Pong Ball Song" to "The Building Block" to "What a Friend We Have in Jesus." Other creativity included a live trumpet call which preceded announcements in mass meetings, in order to focus attenton. And "Amos" (Doug Caskey) helped bring Scripture readings and speaker introductions to life through his humorous dramatizations.

Doug Caskey as "Amos" provided humor, introductions and dramatized Scripture readings for mass sessions.



While the heat in Grace Hall was often oppressive, applause and standing ovations were frequent, as were cheers for different colleges, geographic regions and specific dorm groups. Jo Bontrager, youth gathering coordinator, observed, "There is a real dichotomy between evening mass sessions and what these youth experience on Sunday mornings in their home congregation. If this is how they like worship . . . then maybe they can help us look at some new expressions."

Built around the theme "Christ Our Cornerstone," youth morning worship services included speakers Joy Lovett, David Schroeder, Leroy Friesen, Charles Christano and Beulah Hostetler.

Evening worship speakers and topics were as follows: David Schroeder, "Who Was Christ?"; Jep Hostetler, "What Do We Hide Because We Fear Rejection?"; David Augsburger, "Love as a Lifestyle" and Tony Campolo, "Christ—the Stone on Whom We Are Built Together."

Throughout the day, youth could choose from a wide variety of seminars (which varied daily), workshops (that lasted throughout the week), recreation and films. AIR (Action, Interaction, Reflection) groups of approximately 10 people from the same dorm floor or fraternity met on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. SHAIR groups (two AIR groups combined to form a co-ed group) met Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday. Late night activities included films, music, recreation tournaments, drama and a feature seminar "Rock Music—(How) Should We Listen?" by Dennis Benson. The youth campus also included a display area with representatives from various church colleges and service organizations and a joint Provident/Faith and Life Bookstore.

Tuesday evening, in a massive trans-

nonite Youth Gathering

portation feat, 30 school buses shuttled the youth over the mountain to the Saucon campus for a joint session with the adults. In what Julie Spicher (editor of the youth gathering newssheet *the building block*) called an "evening's imagistic look at discipleship," youth added their clapping and enthusiasm to the normally more sedate adult meeting.

Tuesday evening's program included pre-service music by youth from Mennonite high school choirs, congregational singing led by Harry Loewen (music coordinator for the youth gathering) and accompanied by Road Less Travelled, and a song by Chuck Neufeld. Richard Kauffman, editor of *With*, the joint MC/GC youth magazine, read segments from the Sermon on the Mount interspersed with responses from four youth who shared personal reflections on the Scripture. The Hesston College Players concluded the evening with a series of vignettes portraying human quests for God.

Saturday the youth celebrated the 300th anniversary of German Mennonites arriving in North America with "Heritage Day." Described by planners as "a day to explore our inheritance—our heritage as members of the Mennonite Christian family—the day included plays, storytellers, outdoor musicians, choirs, films, seminars on the historic theme and tours of Germantown. Adults were also invited to participate in Heritage Day.

Sunday morning, youth were once again shuttled over the mountain to help fill Stabler Arena to the rafters for a joint youth-adult worship celebration. Here the mass youth choir provided the call to worship and meditative music for the communion service. Other parts of the program included the sermon, "God's People and God's Missions," by Charles Christano, president of Mennonite World Conference; a celebrative oratorio, "That We May Be One," written for the occasion by Esther Wiebe and Urie Bender; and spirited congregational singing.

Youth responses to Bethlehem '83 were as varied as the youth themselves. While some complained it was boring, others found "too much to choose from." Shared complaints seemed to be the heat and humidity, the layout of the campus, which required walking long distances up and down steep grades (in sharp contrast to Bowling Green '81), the fraternities' uncleanliness, the institutional food and a mix-up with the computer printouts. But others focused on the positive dimensions of the week, such as the dedication of many young people to the church and the unity between denominations.

An AIR group prays together.

From left, Jude Krehbiel, Doug Krehbiel and Tom Harder perform "Lonesome Valley."

Bethlehem '83 was a turning point for both adults and youth in that the programming was joint MC/GC, but most seemed oblivious to this distinction. Ruth Boehm, co-moderator for the event, said, "Whether someone is GC or MC is not an issue. We don't even talk about it." Ruth predicted, "In the future there will be unity between the people, but the structures will need to change." Co-moderator Arnold Fast added, "The youth will not stand against unity between conferences."

Reflecting on the whole week, Beryl Jantzi, youth pastor of Akron (Pa.) Mennonite Church, shared, "One negative aspect is that a lot of kids were skipping sessions because they simply were not there spiritually. But the positive aspect is that the planners did well to include social and physical options for those who aren't struggling with faith issues. There's been a wide gamut of offerings. This builds a positive impression of churchwide gatherings. That's a major step in itself. In that, it's (Bethlehem '83) been successful."

Conference committees for the 1983-86 triennium

The General Conference Mennonite Church consists of 352 congregations and fellowships in Canada, the United States and South America. These groups range in membership from a handful to well over 1,000. In order to carry out its work in the many areas of ministry in which it is involved, the conference divides its work among various commissions, divisions and committees.

These committees were reshaped at Bethlehem '83. Each group elected executive officers, and a listing of commissions, divisions and committees appears below. Many of these have subcommittees which are not listed here. A complete listing of conference committees, personnel and congregations will appear in the *1984 General Conference Mennonite Church Handbook* when it is distributed later this year.

General Board

Jake Tilitzky (president)	Abbotsford, B.C.
James Gingerich (vice president)	Moundridge, Kan.
Norma Wiens (secretary)	Newton, Kan.
Kenneth Bauman	Berne, Ind.
Irene Dunn	Normal, Ill.
Richard Early	Souderton, Pa.
Loretta Fast	Toronto
John R. Friesen	Winnipeg
Jake Harms	Winnipeg
Al Heer	Paso Robles, Calif.
Duane Heffelbower	Reedley, Calif.
Anna Juhnke	North Newton, Kan.
Helen Kruger	Kitchener, Ont.
Lynn Liechty	Berne, Ind.
Elaine Rich	Bluffton, Ohio
Ben Sprunger	Columbus, Ohio
Don Steelberg	Wadsworth, Ohio
Alice Suderman	Mountain Lake, Minn.

Division of Administration

Carol Suter (chairperson)	Pandora, Ohio
Wayne Mumbauer (vice chairperson)	Harleysville, Pa.
Gladys Graber (financial secretary)	Buhler, Kan.
Richard Rosenberger (recording secretary)	Quakertown, Pa.
Irene Dunn	Normal, Ill.
Paul I. Dyck	Bluffton, Ohio
Duane Heffelbower	Reedley, Calif.
Jake Hildebrand	St. Catharines, Ont.
Lawrence Voth	North Newton, Kan.

Program Committee

Neil Matthies (chairperson)	Martensville, Sask.
Kathy Hildebrand	St. Catharines, Ont.
Gloria Miller	Hartford, S.D.
James Schrag	Newton, Kan.
John Sprunger	Cordell, Okla.
Erland Waltner	Elkhart, Ind.

Commission on Home Ministries

Don Steelberg (chairperson)	Wadsworth, Ohio
Marian Franz (vice chairperson)	Washington
Paul Boschman (secretary)	Abbotsford, B.C.
Henry A. Fast	North Newton, Kan.
Kay Ann Fransen	Normal, Ill.
Dorothy Nickel Friesen	Kansas City, Kan.
Donald W. Fry	Geneva, Neb.
Milton Harder	Lansdale, Pa.
Homer Janzen	Rosthern, Sask.
Lynn Liechty	Berne, Ind.
Ivorie Lowe	Markham, Ill.
Ted Pankratz	South Hutchinson, Kan.
Barbara R. Voth	Paso Robles, Calif.
Malcolm Wenger	Selkirk, Man.
Leonard Wiebe	Newton, Kan.

CHM U.S.

Willis Busenitz	Busby, Mont.
Pearl Janzen	Moencopi, Ariz.

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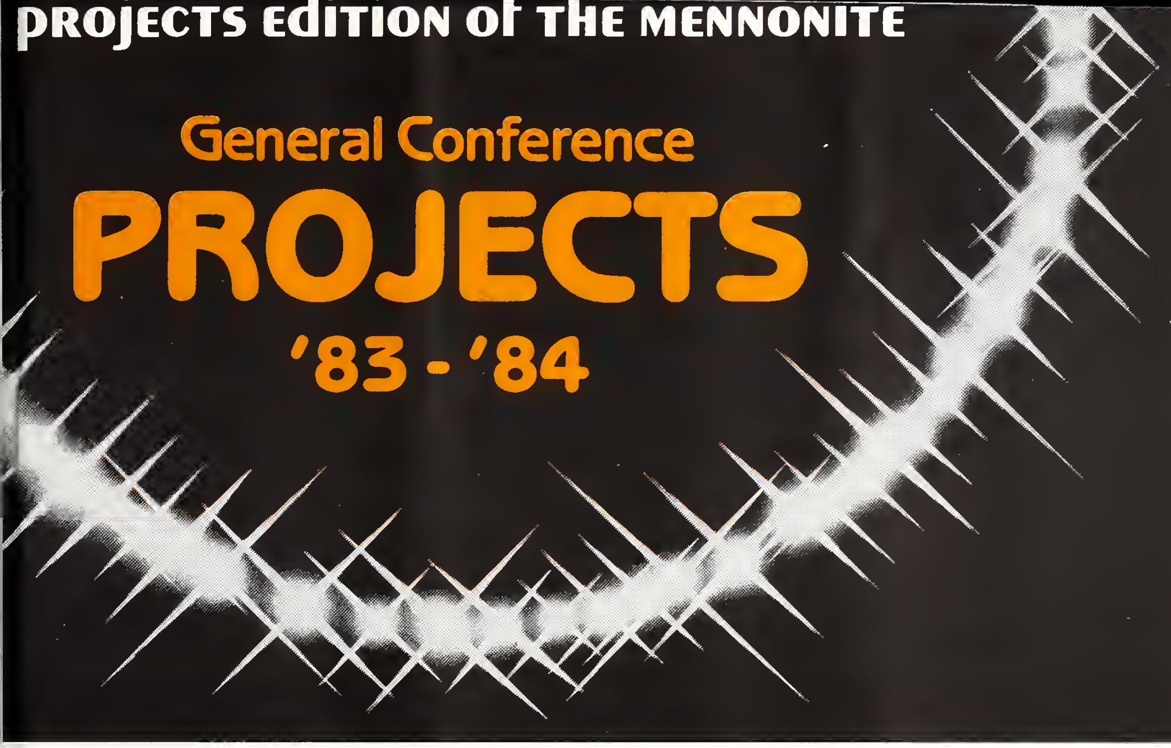


General Conference
PROJECTS
'83 - '84

Projects! Why do you and I like special projects? Because then we know exactly what our efforts are supporting. That feels good. I recommend the projects in this list as worthy of our generous support. May God bless those who give of themselves so that ministry can happen.

Vern Preheim, General Secretary.

COM Projects

ADOPT A MISSIONARY

COM missionary support is church based. Churches in Canada and the United States commission, pray for, and financially support missionaries. Establish a personal tie. . . .

Average support:	Single	$12,500
	Couple	23,000
	OMV	3,000

BOLIVIA

Evangelism	$ 125
Christian education	900

BOTSWANA

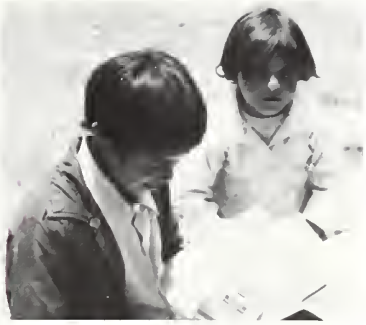
Radio	1,350
Seminars	350

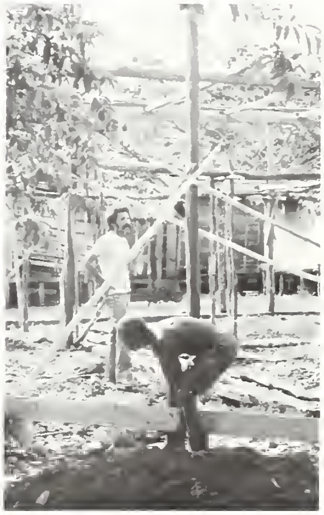
BRAZIL

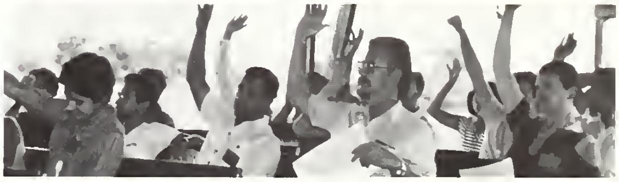
Literature	1,600
*Leadership Training Project	2,500

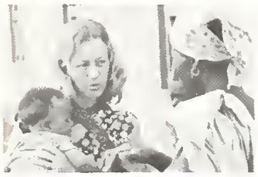
COLOMBIA

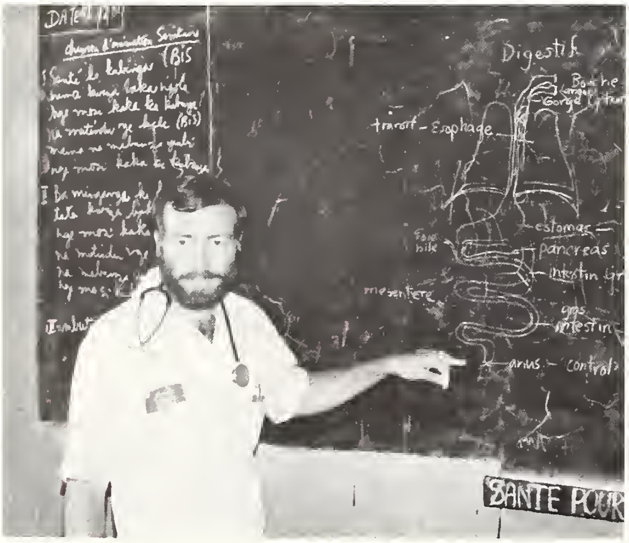
New congregations	1,500
Literacy Program	270
Mutual Aid & Disaster Fund	400
Anabaptist curriculum	1,900
Primary schools (2)	9,000
*Bogota Center	6,100











GERMANY

Umsiedler	$23,000

HONG KONG

New outreach	890
Worker training (3)	2,800
Worker support	95
Study Center/library	5,800
*Church property	6,000

INDIA

New outreach/church support	5,745
Christian nurture	6,100
Woodstock	3,000
Korba Reading Room	1,900
Scholarships	3,000

JAPAN

Tokyo evangelism	5,000

KOREA

*Peace witness	3,000

LESOTHO

Rural development	$ 525
Chaplaincy at National Univ.	265

MEXICO

Clinic	1,700
Schools (3)	2,000

PARAGUAY

CEMTA (Seminary)	5,000
Seminars & camps	2,000
Literature	2,350

TAIWAN

Church planting	3,700
Mennonite Christian Hospital	11,445
Social services	3,250
Publications	4,000
Pastors' study fund	850
Seminary scholarships	500

TRANSKEI

Bible teaching	1,160

UPPER VOLTA

Outreach	870
Development	800
Linguistics program	3,500

URUGUAY

Pastoral subsidies	6,000
Study Center	170

USSR

Kirchliche Ministries	3,000

ZAIRE

IMCK (Medical)	1,570
SEDA (Development)	1,535
Translation	1,970
STUDIPROKA (Radio)	1,570
*Community Health Center	6,000
*Duplex at CMZ Administrative Center	25,000

Amounts are annual figures and reflect only COM's share. Contributions may be a portion of the total amount. Contact COM if further information is desired.

*Special or above-budget project

CHM Projects

$3	helps provide jump ropes, kick balls, basketballs, softballs, ball gloves, bats, tether balls, soccer balls and volleyballs to use on the Hopi Mission School playground.
$5	provides a week's scholarship for a student at the Hopi Mission School in Kykotsmovi (Oraibi), Arizona. Most of the teachers are MVS workers whose donated time in Christ's name helps keep tuition low.
$5	would pay for one van trip to pick up people to attend the church services at the Ethnic Chinese Mennonite Church in Santa Clara, California.
$20	from 100 persons or groups helps support the work of an Asian refugee center in Edmonton, Alberta.
$20	from 100 persons or groups helps a revolving loan fund to people in temporary financial need through Welcome Inn in Hamilton, Ontario.
$25	helps with the costs of answering inquiries and helping persons get into Mennonite Voluntary Service at the new MVS office in Winnipeg.
$15	will help provide a Christian camping experience for one child on the Cheyenne reservation in Montana.
$10	helps provide Hopi Mission School with rainy-day educational games, records, tape player, record player and library books.
$10	each from 500 people or groups would help the General Conference do its share in the support of Antonio Arevalo's church planting effort among Spanish-speaking people in Dallas, Texas.
$10	a week from 150 contributors will help with this year's costs of the translation of Sunday school materials (The Foundation Series) into Spanish. The materials will be used in South America, Central American countries such as Mexico and in North America in our Hispanic churches.
$10	from 100 persons or groups helps do the distribution of the conference's new radio spots which congregations can use in their outreach efforts.
$15	would help cover the cost of retirement pay for 15 home missionaries who gave much service at low wages and may need a supplement for their pension. An appeal for additional funds is being made to add to a retirement fund made inadequate by inflation.
$25	each from 60 persons or groups will help our conference do its share in supporting the Inter-Mennonite Council on Aging to provide churches with study materials and workshops.
$50	will help provide the costs of one week of orientation for one person entering Mennonite Voluntary Service.
$50	would help with the $250 needed each week for the support of workers in Asian Mennonite churches in the United States.
$75	would help Hopi Mission School obtain two area rugs, drapes, desks, and chairs.
$100	would help with the cost for a person in an alcoholism treatment program the Northern Cheyenne have developed.

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COE Projects

$50	provides the leader for a one-day Foundation Series workshop.
$.20	per mile gets presenters to a Mennonite Marriage Encounter weekend.
$115	pays about half the travel for area youth workers to meet for planning.
$1.25	provides the devotional book, *A Reason to Sing*, for a college or university student.
$10	helps provide payment to write and publish a 34-session Adult Bible Survey course.
$150	pays the tuition, room and board for a teacher's attendance at Project: Teach
$2	subsidizes one "Many Gifts" record album and songbook for young adult and congregational use.
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Whatever happened to those 600 kids?

Gordon Houser

Each day, Tuesday through Saturday during Bethlehem '83, over 600 children in grades one through eight rode pumpkin-colored school buses to Cedar Crest College, a women's school on a beautiful, forested campus in Allentown, about 25 minutes from Lehigh University in Bethlehem. Each evening of these days, the buses carried the children back to their parents in time for supper. What happened there? What did the children do while the adults conducted their business and the youth moved through their numerous activities?

I visited the Cedar Crest campus one sultry afternoon under skies threatening rain, later escaping in a car as the threat was carried out with a downpour. Walking into one of the large brick buildings on the spacious grounds, I joined a group of first and second graders as they were going to crafts. The leader, or counselor, of this group was Brenda Kay Miller of Louisville, Ohio. Despite having eight children's needs on her mind, she was kind enough to let me tag along. She even showed me a schedule of their daily activities and answered my questions with a congenial smile.

The children were divided into groups of five to eight and assigned a counselor, who was to be with them throughout the week. The counselors were to see that the children got to their activities in good shape, to help them with certain activities and to answer any questions. (There were plenty of questions, Brenda told me.)

From what I witnessed, these counselors were pretty remarkable. They were attentive, sensitive to the three or four children calling at once for them to make right whatever was wrong. They entered into the children's excitement, joined in their curiosity, and in the midst of it all, stopped what they were doing to take one or two to the bathroom.

Each day was filled with activities, I learned. They went something like this: after getting off the bus the children met with counselors; next they received input (one day it was Sneetches(?), another day Nancy Marshal spoke about being handicapped, another day a puppet show was presented); then a follow-up with counselors, preparing for lunch, eating lunch, preparing for swimming, swimming, then music, storytime and snack, crafts and recreation. Brenda explained that the order of activities was adjusted somewhat partway through the week. It seemed to me that flexibility would have to be a prerequisite to working with children.

I watched the group of children I had joined as they made plaster casts with their thumbs as molds, then painted a face on each one and pasted pieces of yarn for hair in order to make a small puppet. The instructor came over and enlisted my thumb as a mold. Soon I was decorating my own cast and having more trouble than some of the children.

After crafts these children were led to another building to practice music they would be performing in a later evening session for the adults. This time period served as a break for the counselors. Several left their children with those teaching music and retreated to a lounge to rest their feet. A rest well deserved, I would say.

Through the week I asked several children what they particularly liked about the children's activities. Jan Eric especially liked the game blob, a kind of team tag. Becky told me about the life-sized puppets she watched on Saturday morning. One of the favorite things for James was that at lunch they could drink all the pop they wanted. But Mica perhaps summed it up. When I asked what she liked best, she said shyly, "Everything."

Missed opportunity

The Plow and the Sword, *a drama with music, script and music by J. Harold Moyer, lyrics by Elaine Sommers Rich, Ausbund translations by Joanna Andres, presented Aug. 4, 1983, at Bethlehem, Pa.*

Reviewed by Gordon Houser, editorial assistant for The Mennonite

From left, George Dyck, Ron Brunk, Royce Brunk and Dale Smith sing a song from The Plow and the Sword.

The Revolutionary War brought difficult years to the Pennsylvania Mennonites. After the 1776 Declaration of Independence, the Pennsylvania legislature required all men from 18 to 50 to serve in the army or pay a fine. They were also to sign an oath of loyalty to the Continental government. Mennonites were not in agreement as to how to respond to these demands.

The Plow and the Sword includes historical and fictional events centering on the Bechtel's congregation near Sellersville. The ministers and deacons meet to deal with the war-related issues. Their bishop, Christian Funk, favors paying the special fine, but their neighboring bishop, Andrew Ziegler, does not. Then the war comes to the farms and fields of Montgomery and Bucks County Mennonites. As British General Howe's army moves closer, Washington retreats to an encampment near the Towamencin Mennonite meetinghouse. Soldiers confiscate crops and livestock; some wounded from the battle of Germantown are cared for in Mennonite homes.

The drama is organized as the recounting by Abraham and Esther Gehman of two different days, about three weeks apart, years before, when the men at Bechtel's congregation came to a decision about how to respond to the tax and loyalty oath. The play's content was powerfully pertinent to the delegates meeting at Bethlehem who discussed present-day responses to war taxes.

The situation has unlimited potential for dramatic as well as didactic purposes. But drama may be a misnomer, since the play is mostly a narrative. The audience is generally told what happens, while the action that is shown on stage seems less than dramatic. This is due less to the script than to its performance.

First, the speaking parts were prerecorded and subsequently mouthed by the actors. The awkwardness of this arrangement seemed to make them uncomfortable, since their movements were stiff and they overgesticulated. And the lines emerged as if from slow, uncertain readers. The characterization was consequently shallow, and it was difficult to feel the dilemma they kept talking about. The debate that had occurred two days earlier in delegate sessions was livelier, more passionate, than the debate on stage.

The two children's parts, though short, were much better acted. Their presence seemed to enliven the stage. The music was good, especially the flute accompaniment. However, both speaking parts and the music were hindered by an uneven sound system. The transitions from drama to songs were generally smooth, though a few were awkward.

The opportunity for a dramatic retelling of a piece of Mennonite history powerfully relevant to our times is missed in *The Plow and the Sword*. The story is told, but if told better, it would be less easily forgotten.

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GOD OF GREAT AND GOOD

At week's end: some reflections

Editors' note: As Bethlehem '83 began winding down, Marion Keeney Preheim, staff writer for the General Conference's news service, wandered the Saucon Valley campus asking various individuals for their impressions of the week. Following are some of their responses.

"You didn't have to worry about what you thought because everybody thought the same things. Highlights for me were speakers Tony Campolo and David Augsburger at the mass youth meetings. I'd like less hills next time. We had nice dorms." *Lorelei Byer, high school student from Salem, Ohio*

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"I was impressed with how General Conference president Jacob Tilitzky put Christ at the center of this event. All our power is in Him and we should follow Him. I affirm the way people dialogued and welcomed others to express themselves and then listened to them. I liked the emphasis on peace witness and inter-Mennonite cooperation. Mennonites were made aware that they should live their Christianity and not just have a good confession." *Mary Epp, missionary in Kalonda, Zaire, from Hanley, Sask.*

"It means a lot to have this sense of unity. I don't think there is as much difference between conferences as within the General Conference. The issues in the conference need to be addressed. It's been a time of a real sense of joy and of hurt. I love the fellowship in the worship, singing and listening to speakers, but the pain comes in the direction we go in the business sessions. I need time to absorb it and I need prayers back home." *Tim Epp, pastor from Dallas, Ore.*

"I appreciated how we're beginning to cooperate with the Mennonite Church. I also appreciated the controlled yet open atmosphere of the conference. We have a lot of work to follow up to keep things moving. I have talked to some Franco-

By Sunday morning, all had been said and done . . . except for packing the bags.

STABLER ATHLETIC CONVOCATION CEN

nia people about that. It was too hot and humid at the conference but that wasn't our (Easterners') fault." *David Hillegas, Eastern District conference minister, Quakertown, Pa.*

"I looked forward to open and fresh discussion with the two groups coming together, particularly because I belong to a dual conference church. There was more openness and candor than I anticipated. Whenever groups come together, one is vulnerable, but perhaps vulnerability is one of our strengths. Dealing with justice and homosexuality in the business sessions went beyond my expectations. However, during the last decade we have made strides in trusting each other and in a growing sense of our responsibility in society." *William Kruger, high school principal from Kitchener, Ont.*

Lin

Witmer

"The conference was fantastic, exciting, successful. It's a historic occasion for me. It renewed my mission work, spiritual life and vision. I found people natural and friendly. I commend the management of every program and of details like transportation." *Peter Lin, pastor in Houston*

"We brought 10 youth and young adults, so they will be reinforced in their Mennonite identity. Certainly for us from the Midwest it was a first experience of meeting Mennonites here in the East. One of our group suggested that hymn number 606 become the national anthem." *Gloria Miller, peace educator from Sioux Falls, S.D.*

"I thought we had good meetings. I liked most of the speakers. I would have liked less steps to climb unless there could have been moving sidewalks. I could have gone for better food. I like the contemporary music, and everybody was so friendly." *Becky Witmer, high school student from Salem, Ohio*

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The challenges of Latin America

Humberto Flores

1. Great opportunity for evangelism. The church in Latin America faces great openness to the gospel. Luis Palau, one of the best-known Latin America evangelists, writes, "This is an hour of great opportunity, a time of harvest and redemption for Latin America" (CLADE II, Lima, 1979).

The Latin theologian Samuel Escobar writes, "The theme of the Lausanne Congress, that all Latin America may hear the voice of God, is a dream now possible of fulfillment" (editorial).

There is freedom to preach the gospel almost anywhere. The depressed economy, which affects everybody, is making ground fertile for the gospel.

It was my privilege to coordinate a three-year evangelistic crusade involving all the Baptist churches. In spite of many strikes and political instability, our plan proceeded without interruption and with good results.

2. Contextualization of the gospel. The churches in Latin America are today polarized over the concept of contextualization. Some lean toward the theology of liberation; others toward the North American influenced "biblical inerrancy," also called conservative theology.

To explain my understanding of contextualization, I borrow from Samuel Libert, an Argentinian evangelist, from a document he wrote for the CLADE II Congress: To contextualize is not to make the gospel secular, because we still are a "chosen people" (1 Peter 2:9). On the other hand, to contextualize is not to create a micro-climate—aseptic, sure and comfortable for the church people. To contextualize is not to accommodate the gospel to a culture—preaching a gospel of gifts only without the cost of discipleship. To contextualize is not to sacralize any method of evangelism or church growth; that is, there is no perfect or one divine method of evangelism. When one contextualizes the gospel then one is more than an activist (or a theoretical activist); one lives in a tension of activism and pietism. To contextualize is not to elaborate a theology based on the circumstances, but the circumstances must be judged by our theology (Acts 5:19-20).

In conclusion, Libert says that contextualization is a spontaneous process under the freedom and guidance of the Holy Spirit.

From left, Baltazar Opimi and Clemente Salas discuss priorities for the Bolivian church.

3. Ethnic structures. How do we deal with the many small tribes that are scattered all over Latin America (20 in Bolivia, 30 in Mexico, etc.)? Also, how do we deal with the big ethnic groups like the Mayas and Aztecs in Central America, the Quechuas in the Andean countries and the Guaranies on the southeast coast?

I concentrate on the Quechuas because I am a descendant of them. Researchers estimate that the Quechuas are around 12 million people (speaking the mother tongue) in Bolivia, Peru and Ecuador.

One study by the Church Growth Institute of Fuller Theological Seminary says, "To underestimate the silent and introverted temperament of the Quechua Indian is a mistake, for underneath there is a strong desire to break the bonds and once more govern and lead their people" (Redd, Monterroso, Johnson, p. 218).

The Quechuas are realizing they are a big group that was mistreated in colonial times and also in the Republic times by the minorities. They also have shown that they will not be integrated into the national culture and their tongue will not disappear. Missionaries must understand the nature of this Indian culture, its intricate family patterns, its group conscience and its mechanism for the reception of new ideas.

With the impact of mass communication like radio and television comes the question, "Will the Quechuas be swallowed up by the secularistic and materialistic approaches of Marxism or will they be a spiritual revolutionary force in this vast continent of South America?"

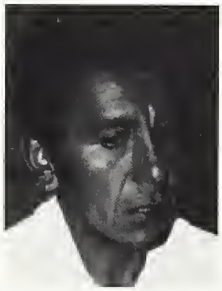
Right now there is a great awakening among Bolivian and Ecuadorian Quechuas. They need partners in the discipling of new believers. Our seminary has started a program that begins with literacy in Quechua and goes to theological studies in a basic way. This program we call "open education at a preliterate level."

Quechuas did not have any literature in the Inca times and few religious books in colonial times, during the independence and up to now. The Quechuas—those 12 million—are 80 percent illiterate.

4. Pressing, immediate challenges. A. *Brain drain*—the constant migration of the best-trained people from South America to North America. Even in the church the better evangelists and theologians are often brought to North America to work from there as a base.

B. *Poverty.* Records show 20 percent of Latin population are undernourished or don't have enough money to eat and survive. Most of them are in the suburban areas of the cities. There is no segregation in the church but there are pressures from the less educated and poor people trying to look more like the rich people.

C. *Lack of self-image.* Most Latin Americans still look to the *gringo* or light skin as the gifted, rich people. In the church there is the tendency to underestimate the native leaders compared to the foreign missionaries.



Humberto Flores, dean of students at Baptist Theological Seminary in Cochabamba, Bolivia, is on a year's leave to study at the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, 3003 Benham Ave., Elkhart, IN 46517. Humberto's article is based on the presentation he made to General Conference sessions at Bethlehem '83 as part of the Commission on Overseas Mission report on Latin America.

COMMISSION ON EDUCATION

Jane and Bill Discuss the Student and Young Adult Census

Jane:	How does your Mennonite church keep in touch with you?
Bill:	Each September my home pastor puts my name on the Student and Young Adult Census report. In 1982 more than 12,000 GCs and MCs were on a list kept by the Commission on Education and the Mennonite Board of Missions.
Jane:	Does it *really* matter that your pastor completes the Census?
Bill:	Yes, it does. I admit I came to the city to assure distance between my church and myself so I could make my own way. At first I resented the census. I wanted space. But I now realize how much I need to stay in touch with my church roots. The contact with the church, because of the Census, feels good!

Meet Karen Graber,

COE secretary. Karen provides secretarial services for the offices of Children's Education, Youth Education, Adult Education, and Young Adult and Church School Education. In addition, Karen types Foundation Series manuscripts and handles the paperwork and keypunching for the Student and Young Adult Census. Thank you, Karen, for a job well done!

COE Calendar

February
16-19 PERSPECTIVE '84 (Minneapolis)
April
1-6 Project: Teach
(Owen Sound, Ontario)
Marriage Encounter Schedule
10/14-16 Wichita; 10/21-23 Salem, OR, 11/11-13 Laurelville, PA, 11/18-20 Spruce Lake, PA & Calgary

Direction For the '80s

The Commission on Education (COE) wants to affirm four emphases for the '80s. They are to: (1) increase biblical understanding, (2) strengthen families, (3) strengthen the church community, and (4) develop more effective disciples. A dedicated commission and staff committed to these emphases are working at policy and programs to meet your needs in these areas. In our faithfulness to Jesus, we need to continually commit our way of living to him—to proclaim Jesus in word and deed. We, of COE, encourage you to uphold this mission with your prayers and financial support.

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Christ is our cornerstone

The theme of Bethlehem '83 was "Christ the Cornerstone." Well-attended Bible studies each morning pursued that theme through the Book of Ephesians. Singing, prayer, readings, a special Bible teaching and a special response were featured Tuesday-Saturday mornings from 8:30-9:30.

Following are some notes and quotes from those Bible studies—compiled by Bernie Wiebe.

Tuesday, Aug. 2. The idea of "blessing" seems to run through Ephesians 1. "The apostle Paul seems to be communicating the limitless implications of being followers of Christ. From that I am asking how we as a people and a church can be forces for good in the world today." *—led by George R. Brunk III, dean at Eastern Mennonite Seminary, Harrisonburg, Va.*

Wednesday, Aug. 3. "In the past you were . . . *now* you are," from key statements in Ephesians 2.

Reflecting the geography of Bethlehem, Pa., and the strangeness of the roads for many, *Wilma Bailey, interim director of the James Lark program for urban and black ministries at Goshen (Ind.) College*, told us that many had missed their "turnoffs" from the roads to Bethlehem '83 because "you were on the wrong road in the first place." She said that is how sin operates; you end up in a state of spiritual death because you cannot find the right exit from the wrong road. But that was the past.

Now you are alive in Christ Jesus for good works. Wilma illustrated this new unity: "We all come from different backgrounds, different geographical locations, different conferences. We were strangers to one another but we have been made one in Christ . . . (God) has made us family—a family that has lots of room for growth, encompassing more people."

When we categorize people, it becomes easy to erect walls. In God's family there's always room for more. As we mature spiritually, we too seek to break down walls of separation and bring more people into our spiritual family.

Sometimes in our churches we have kept too much to ourselves.

A liturgical movement group responds to Hernandez' teaching on Ephesians 4.

Thursday, Aug. 4. Paul speaks six times early in Ephesians 3 of the "secret," the "mystery" revealed to him in order that he could communicate it freely among those who did not know it. To Paul, being a missionary is a privilege. We sometimes take God's Great Commission too lightly.

As illustrated in Acts 16, the Macedonian call for help comes to those already in mission. Christian service becomes an enabling privilege.

The gospel is entrusted to us as a gift from God. As faithful communicators we are challenged to make this mystery plain among those around us. To keep doing God's will in this, we need a special sensitivity to God and his will. We must avoid deifying or demonizing structures in and through which we serve.

David Chiu, church planter from Saskatoon, closed his teaching of Ephesians 3 with a reminder that Mennonites too often translate non-militance and non-violence into our "spiritual welfare." I took him to imply that our spiritual "warfare" then also often becomes a "non" exercise. Could he be right?

Friday, Aug. 5. *Samuel Hernandez works with Hispanic ministries for the Mennonite Church out of Elkhart, Ind.* In his teaching on Ephesians 4, Sam spoke of a vision to grow and to mature. We must "plant more churches and bring more people *into* the Lord." At the same time we must nurture maturity in the faith. Common beliefs are important, but not as important as it is to love one another in Christ. Paul calls us "to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (4:3).

Many people are seeking a sure Word of the Lord for unity and peace in their own lives and in today's world. We have the privilege to share this Word.

Saturday, Aug. 6. *Gertrude Roten, assistant professor of Greek and New Testament at Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind.*, summarized the first four chapters of Ephesians, "You have been walking with Paul in the heavens this week. You have seen the whole body of creation cut off from the Creator by sin decomposing in a sorry mess. You have witnessed a rebirth, effected by Christ, reuniting all its parts into an organism with Christ himself as head. You with Paul have dreamed about the future of the church . . . the church of Jew and gentile, making known to principalities and powers the manifold wisdom of God."

Chapter 5 urges us to be "imitators of God" (5:1). But how can you and I copy the essence of God in his works as Creator or Redeemer? Imitation is foreign to the Old Testament. The Hebrew would say "walk after" or "walk in the ways of." "Walk" occurs eight times in the immediate context of being "imitators of God." To imitate God is to fit into God's plan with joy and obedience.

Chapter 5:8-14 is a praise to the victorious power of light. Christ is that light. The light has changed and will completely change the saints. The saints are daily to demonstrate by action what is the will and power of the Lord, to learn (*dokimazo* means to put to the test, examine, check credentials, accept as proved). Rather than excommunicate deviating brothers, the text recommends such a testimony by conduct as will win over the perpetrators of evil.

Paul recalls for his readers the time when they were sepa-

bible

Presentation of Esther Wiebe's oratorio "Christ the Cornerstone"

rated from Christ, alienated, having no hope, without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus they who once were far off have been brought near. With Christ as example, the author moves rapidly into the hearth and home, 5:22–6:9. This section is known as the *Haustafeln*—the tablets of the house.

"Wives be subject to your husbands in all things . . . fear your husbands." Have you loved someone so deeply that as you anticipated a meeting you at the same time loved and feared?

Husbands, love her, love her, love her. Have you seen the face of a woman who has just been told that she is loved with the most absolute love—that love which leads to a marriage relationship? Within this framework, the lofty "Bridal Song" of Christ and the church is found. The marriage covenant is grounded solidly and finds its supreme example in the Lord's covenant with his people.

Christ is central in the discussion. Those of supposedly high or low estate are subordinated to the same highest authority. Therefore, before the Lord and before one another, parents and children, masters and slaves, occupy the same position. All must obey.

The Lord's coming figures into the discussion, in regard to both reward and impartiality. The coming Lord alone decides on the right or wrong done by old and young, rich and poor.

Paul talks of the mystery. The *Heilsgeschichte* for the Jew is now cracked open for gentiles in the person of God's Christ revealed. What was always in the heart of God is now evident in the church in which Jew and gentile are one. From now on, the church and the Bridegroom lead the principalities and the powers. In them alone history unfurls, and in them God's plan for the consummation of time is found. In them righteousness will prevail.

The whole armor of God is presented—tested by the author and found fit for all people. Our battles are not against flesh and blood but against the best schemes of the devil. Salvation is our "helmet" and the "Word of God" is our sword.

Paul ends his letter to the Ephesians with prayer: Peace and love with faith and grace be with all who love Christ with an imperishable and incorruptible love.

With this example, look therefore carefully how you walk . . . not as unwise . . . but as wise . . . be filled with the Spirit.

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When it was discovered—some years ago—that the 43rd General Conference Mennonite Church Triennial Sessions and the Mennonite Church General Assembly were both scheduled to meet in 1983, it was soon agreed that these bodies should meet together, if at all possible. Not only have we worked cooperatively on a number of ventures for years, this would mark the 300th anniversary of the first permanent Mennonite settlement in North America. Added to that, we today have 46 churches who hold membership in both conferences. We have much to talk about together and to learn from each other as well as from God's Holy Spirit. This seemed like such a time when it felt good to both the Holy Spirit and to our spirits that we have a joint meeting.

In this issue we share some of the impressions of Bethlehem '83 as they came to *The Mennonite* staff and to others who worked with us to prepare this special portrayal—in words and pictures. We hope you catch some of the feelings we did, that this was more than a human event; it was God at work among his people.

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EDITORIAL

More than a usual conference

From its conception, Bethlehem '83 spelled something different from our usual Triennial Sessions. Those have properly been called "conferences" because their basic purpose was consultation over past and future strategies, interchange of counsel and making formal resolutions.

Bethlehem '83's registration form already said it would be "an *event* to celebrate 300 years of Mennonite experience in North America. It will be a time for the Mennonite Church and General Conference to become better acquainted with each other through worship and fellowship. Each will have business sessions, including reports from the program agencies, debates on issues, elections and setting of priorities."

The *Bethlehem '83 Program* introduced us to "1. A conference celebrating our history . . . 2. An inter-Mennonite conference . . . 3. A conference for church business . . . 4. An international conference . . . 5. An intergenerational conference . . . 6. A conference for fellowship . . ." (pp. 1-2).

Bethlehem '83's buffet of events—over 100 workshops/seminars, MC/GC joint and separate business sessions, a youth conference of 2,200 people, over 600 children with their programs, two full-day and seven half-day tours, storytelling in the tents, charismatic praise and prayer services, interest group meetings, Bible studies in Ephesians, singing in many forms, readings and dramas, creative movement in worship, displays in large number and of excellent quality, evangelistic preaching by Henry Schmidt and Charles Christano, and a special oratorio—provided ample diet for all tastes.

I have to declare Bethlehem '83 a conference, convention, festival, assembly—all mixed into one event.

1. It was conference. Heat and humidity couldn't keep away nearly 2,000 GC adults. Participation in delegate sessions never flagged. I sensed our people were less outspoken than at my two previous GC triennials. Maybe that was because MC guests were present or because of the heat or because we had less business time.

It amazes me to think we GCs passed resolutions on a U.S. Assembly of GC Mennonites, handgun control and support of the Community for Creative Non-Violence (U.S. Assembly), welcomed 26 churches into membership, authorized our conference office to honor requests of employees who do not want taxes withheld from their wages, affirmed the Human Sexuality in the Christian Life study to develop part two on "Sexual Expressions," adopted *Justice and the Christian Witness* and passed measures on inter-Mennonite cooperation, Central America and the German tricentennial celebrations.

I fear we may have passed some of these resolutions too easily. That part was not like our usual GC conference sessions.

2. It was convention. Webster's defines convention: "to come together." That we surely did—about 7,000 participants and local volunteers. Outside of Mennonite World Conference, who has seen such a gathering of Mennonites? From the four winds of mainly the United States and Canada—but also from many countries of the globe—the two historically largest Mennonite groups worshiped, prayed, sang, dialogued and fellowshiped.

I attended both GC and MC business sessions and led two seminars. It became my opinion that, on the basis of proceedings, a stranger would have been hard-pressed to tell the GCs and MCs apart.

Nobody will forget the volunteers who hosted, guided, fed and transported us. That too was an unusual coming together. Thanks to Wayne Mumbauer, Virgil Penner, Russell Bishop and all the rest.

3. It was assembly. I had wondered why the MCs spoke of "assembly" while GCs spoke of "conference." Webster's says of assembly, "a company of persons gathered for deliberation and legislation, worship or entertainment." Maybe MCs can do more of this because they meet more often. If that be so, we GCs should take another thought on this. The extra dimensions at Bethlehem '83 clearly added to the event.

4. It was a festival. Webster's says, "a time of celebration marked by special observances." I doubt anyone could keep from celebrating at Bethlehem. And the special observances climaxed in holy communion commemorating the body and blood of Jesus Christ.

Bethlehem '83 was more than another conference. It was evidence that two groups of God's people can be as one at least for a week.

Let's pray for God's future leading about this unity.
Bernie Wiebe

THE MENNONITE

OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST

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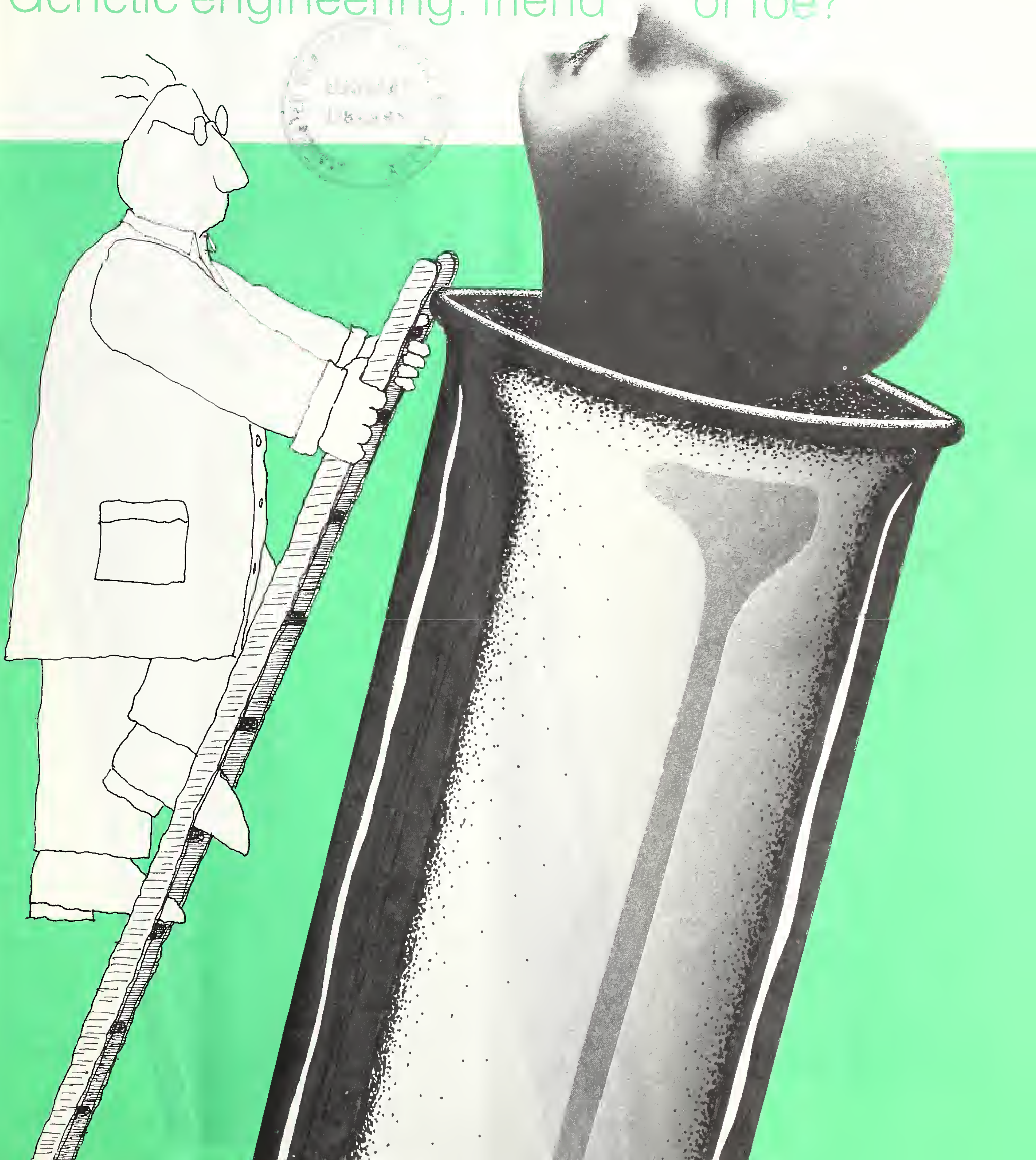
Genetic engineering: friend or foe?



Genetic engineering:

LeRoy Walters, Jr.

The fields of human reproduction and human genetics have received considerable attention in discussions of medical ethics. My goal in this brief article is to describe one new technique from each field, then to ask how we as members of the Christian community ought to respond to these new techniques.

The two techniques. *Test-tube fertilization.* Most of us recall that in the summer of 1978 a baby named Louise Brown was born in England. What was special about Baby Louise was that she had been conceived in a quite unusual way. Her mother had a blockage in her Fallopian tubes which prevented her eggs from making the journey from her ovaries to her uterus. As a result, Mrs. Brown was infertile—apparently hopelessly so. However, she and her husband did not give up hope. They enlisted the help of a physician and a scientist, Patrick Steptoe and Robert Edwards. An egg was removed from one of Mrs. Brown's ovaries and placed in a glass dish in the laboratory. A sample of Mr. Brown's sperm was placed in a glass dish in the laboratory. Much to everyone's delight, fertilization occurred in the glass dish, and a tiny human embryo began to develop. A few days later the embryo was transferred to Mrs. Brown's uterus, where its development continued until the birth of Louise.

Since 1978, clinics offering test-tube fertilization to infertile couples have sprung up in Australia, Europe and the United States. By early 1983, more than 100 infants had been successfully delivered following fertilization in the laboratory. In some cases multiple eggs are harvested from an infertile woman's ovary and are simultaneously fertilized. If two embryos begin to develop, they may both be transferred to the woman's uterus, to increase the chances that

friend or foe?

For Christian physicians and scientists, the attempt to develop gene therapy is part of the healing mission which the church has always sought to fulfill.

pregnancy will occur. If more than two embryos result from test-tube fertilization, two will probably be transferred and the remainder will be frozen—to await thawing and transfer at a future date. Thus, a couple's entire family could conceivably be begun at the same time, but the children could be born at intervals of two or three years.

Gene therapy. Genes contain the instructions which tell the cells of our bodies how to function. Each human cell contains approximately 100,000 of these genes. In some genetic diseases, called "single-gene defects," the failure of one of these 100,000 genes to function properly causes a major problem. For example, cystic fibrosis is a disease caused by a defect in a single gene. Victims of cystic fibrosis have severe lung problems; many do not survive beyond the age of 20. In England and the United States it is estimated that approximately one percent of all children are afflicted with a single-gene defect. In the world at large the situation is even more grim: approximately 200,000 children die each year as a result of inherited blood disorders caused by single-gene defects.

Until now, medicine has only been able to provide supportive care to victims of single-gene defects; the disease process itself cannot be reversed. In other words, there is no treatment available for single-gene defects that is nearly so effective as antibiotics are for the cure of diseases caused by bacteria. (Parents who have used ampicillin to treat ear infections in their young children will realize how important the role of antibiotics can be in the cure of bacterial infections.)

Some scientists have suggested a possible approach to therapy for single-gene defects. They propose finding a way to insert a properly functioning gene into the appropriate cells of the body, so that it can compensate for the malfunctioning of the defective gene. Research performed on fruit flies in 1982 suggests that this approach to the cure of genetic defects may one day be feasible, but much more work remains to be done before the technique is ready for use with human beings.

Questions from a Christian perspective. *Are these the first steps down a slippery slope?* Some people have responded to test-tube fertilization and gene therapy by saying, "I can understand why infertile couples would accept test-tube fertilization and why victims of genetic disease would welcome gene therapy, but these new techniques are just the first steps toward human hatcheries and major social programs of genetic manipulation."

It is true that new developments in science and technology always carry with them the *potential* for misuse. We have seen how the discovery of atomic energy has led to the stockpiling of nuclear weapons which could destroy the entire human race. On the other hand, Christians, while we are realistic about the presence of evil in the world, should not be fatalistic about the future. The biblical message assures us that God is always with us. This message encourages us to seize the constructive possibilities offered to us by scientists and engineers without fear that our actions will inevitably lead to evil consequences.

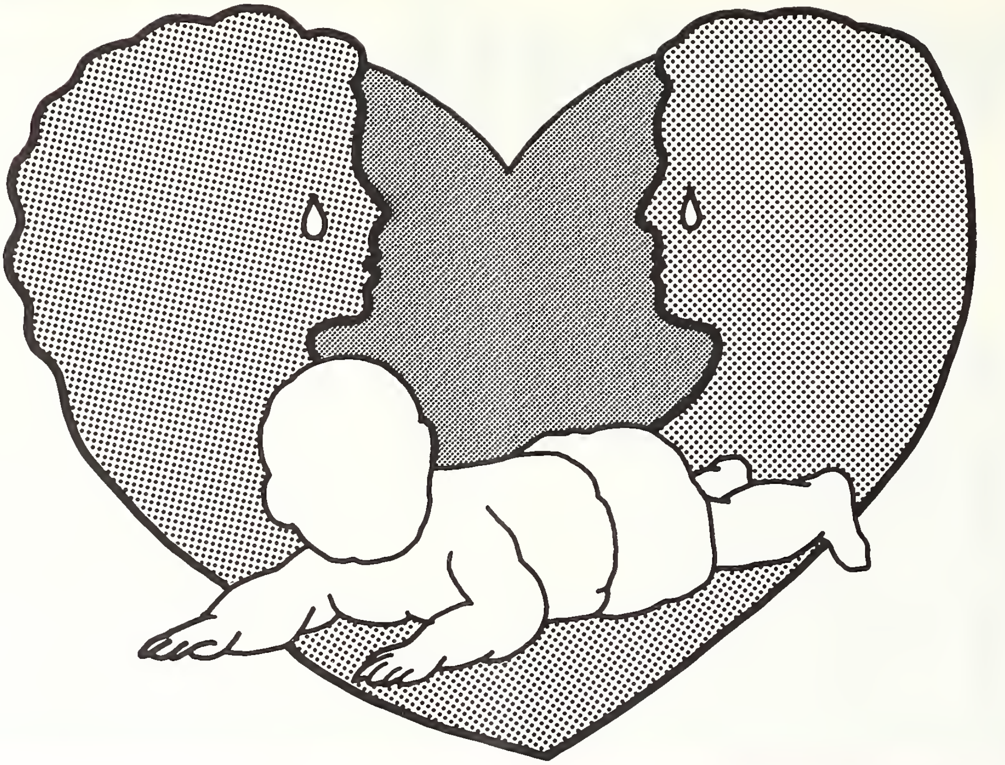
The biblical message also gives us the fortitude to point out the potential dangers of genetic manipulation and to do our part as responsible citizens to prevent the misuse of genetic and reproductive techniques. It was in this spirit that leaders of Protestant, Catholic and Jewish religious groups wrote to President Carter in 1980, urging that the government provide special oversight for the field of genetic engineering. One result of this initiative was a thoughtful study by a presidential commission entitled "Splicing Life: A Report on the Social and Ethical Issues of Genetic Engineering with Human Beings."

Aren't scientists and physicians really playing God? What this question implies is that the people who have developed test-tube fertilization and those who are trying to develop gene therapy are somehow usurping a divine role. Such queries are taken seriously by doctors and researchers. No one wants to be accused of playing God.

But think for a moment of the miraculous powers that God himself has delegated to us, his creatures. Most of us have the capacity to produce children—to create new members of the human race. Viewed in this light, the technique of test-tube fertilization is almost trivial. The physician who employs this technique serves as a kind of "preconception midwife." Or, to change the metaphor, the physician provides a helicopter to transport an egg from a woman's ovary to her uterus when the natural bridge is out.

God has also given us the ability to fight disease, one of the natural evils which befalls us. To develop gene therapy as a cure for genetic diseases would not be playing God. Rather, it would be playing responsible human being, by seeking to alleviate the suffering of our fellow creatures. For the Christian physician or scientist, the attempt to develop gene therapy would be part of the healing mission which the church has always sought to fulfill.

In sum, we as Christians need not respond in fear to new developments in human reproduction and human genetics. We have the freedom to respond with gratitude for new gifts of God while remaining ever vigilant to potential misuses of his good gifts. *A Meetinghouse article* •



A LETTER

Mike and Emily Klassen

"We suspect that your son has Down's Syndrome. The tests from the lab will tell us for sure. I'm sorry." The words of our pediatrician, spoken just hours after the birth of our first child, hit us like a ton of bricks.

The days and months following Scott's birth were filled with unplanned activities. Expecting to quickly return home to a schedule of nighttime feedings, diaper changes and beaming friends and relatives, we helplessly followed our son as he was passed from one specialist to another.

Scott's health was critical for the first four months, a relatively short time compared to some children with whom we became familiar at the Kansas University Medical Center. During this time many people expressed concerns and prayers to us. These were heartfelt and sincere. At times, however, the materials sent to us in the form of poems, "how-tos" and "prayers for special parents" seemed inappropriate and even trite. Of some material only a sentence or two was read before we trashed it.

We wondered, should we ignore such correspondence and write a perfunctory note of appreciation or do we have an obligation to let senders know how inappropriate such letters are? After receiving for the third time a poem entitled "Heaven's Very Special Child," we decided to write a letter (p. 461). The poem describes how God chose my wife and me to be Scott's "special parents." It contains gross generalization and stereotypes of handicapped children, much of which does not apply to people with Down's Syndrome. After reading our letter several times we both noticed our own hurt and anger coming through and so we never sent it to any one person, feeling that our intentions might be misinterpreted. We were asked to share it with *The Mennonite* audience. We do so with the hope that readers will be able to best choose how to respond to people who have suffered family loss.

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"We believe that God cried with us over the unexplainable mistake that occurred in Scott's prenatal development."

Dear ________________,

Thank you for the concerns and thoughts expressed in your letter to us.

We appreciate your sincerity but, quite honestly, our feelings were mixed after reading the poem by Edna Massimilla. We felt it would be good to respond to you regarding a few points made by the poet so that if an occasion like ours comes up again with others, you will be able to be more discreet in your choosing to send this or similar poems to them.

Scott is a child with Down's Syndrome (D.S.). As a D.S. child he will most certainly run and play someday, contrary to the ideas expressed in the poem. (At 12 months he was beginning to crawl up the stairs.) As far as his ability to laugh, Scott is a happy, easy-going child who has smiled and laughed since he was 4 months old. His thoughts do seem far away at times, but we attribute this to my side of the family, which suffers from plain old absentmindedness. With respect to Scott's ability to adapt to this world, we assure you that at times he has adapted to many of us much quicker than we have adapted to him. As far as the wishes of the poet that our special child lead a "content life," if you knew his parents, you would know that Scott's life will be anything but content. As a D.S. person our son will probably be moderately retarded, which means he will likely be able to read, write, hold down a manual labor type of job and live on his own or with other special but productive citizens. In short, Scott may be, as the poet says, known to most as handicapped, but to those of us who know him well he will be known just as Scott.

This perhaps explains our feelings as the parents of a D.S. child regarding the poem you sent us. But what about others whose children have special needs? We can't speak for every parent, but for us the birth of our special child was an event that was initially more tragic than joyous. As time passes and we learn what our child will be capable of doing, the tragedy becomes less. This is not the case with all. An acquaintance of ours still cannot talk without crying about his 25-year-old daughter who was born with cerebral palsy, and who has never laughed or run or played.

In dealing with our personal circumstances, we have come to believe that God does not will the tragic birth of children like Scott or the births of any children whose existence in this world is surrounded by tragedy—such as stillborn babies or babies with long-term, severe health problems. Scott's particular handicap is due to a genetic disorder which scientists cannot fully explain. We do not believe that God should be held responsible for this genetic "malfunctioning" beyond the natural laws of genetic development which he created but which were, in Scott's case, violated. We believe that God cried with us over the unexplainable mistake that occurred in Scott's prenatal development. In this respect, the idea expressed by the poet that God and his angels came together to pick us as Scott's parents is inconceivable to us and—with due respect—slightly offensive.

Regarding ministry to people whose lives are occupied with tragedy, we suggest a personal, one-to-one contact. This kind of personal attention has been most meaningful to us. Our overall assessment of the Massimilla poem is that it may facilitate understanding for those who have never had a special child but it does little for those who have. If it is helpful to you, keep it, but we would advise against sending it to parents of special children unless you have met with them and think it appropriate.

Again, our warm appreciation for your concern and love. We hope our letter has been helpful in your understanding of how to respond to parents with special children.

The crisis which accompanied Scott's birth seems far away these days as we watch our plump, red-cheeked 16-month-old devour a plate of food, suck down his bottle of milk and belly-crawl his way to the toilet—his favorite playground. Still, the memory of the first months of Scott's life lingers and, of course, his own special needs as a child with Down's Syndrome are an ongoing concern.

As at the beginning of his life, we still have to swallow hard when we receive some advice from others about Scott. We suspect this is true with most new parents. Should we just be quiet and endure these prejudices? Dare we risk offending others? Are our intentions clear or are we merely speaking out of leftover, unresolved hurt? These questions are never entirely answered, but it does seem clear to us that a good deal of frank discussion and education is needed when it comes to special children and family loss in general. In the meantime, we can only hope that others will not mistake what they believe to be a defensive attitude on our part with what we believe to be our responsibility at this time to defend ourselves and others like us against the well-intentioned but misinformed advice of others. •

Tax withholding is also a Canadian issue

Allan Siebert

All his life, John R. Dyck of Rosthern, Sask., has been a law-abiding citizen. He's never been to court. But he expects that to change when Revenue Canada catches up with him for non-payment of taxes.

Dyck is one of a small but growing band of Canadians who are refusing to pay the portion of their income taxes they feel is designated for the military. Instead, they are calling for an alternative "peace tax fund" which would use their tax money for peaceful purposes.

Since that alternative does not exist and Dyck withheld 10.5 percent of his taxes for 1981 and for 1982, he expects a court order to arrive eventually.

John R. Dyck is not a young radical defying authority. Officially he is retired (though not willingly or inactively) and has given the better part of the past two decades to service with the Mennonite Central Committee, Mennonite Foundation and the MCC Food Bank. A sudden stroke forced him to slow down over a year ago, but he has recovered and calls it "a real miracle." Now he can go on serving, and he places military tax resistance in that category.

The decision did not come easily or hastily. "I don't know where it (a conviction) began," he commented during an interview at this year's annual meeting of MCC Canada in Saskatoon. He had come to listen to the discussion and spend time with his brother and fellow peace-seeker, Peter J. He remembers that "Cornelia Lehn made us sit up and think" in the late 1970s.

John began with his 1979 tax return, filed while the Dycks were in Jordan under MCC and able to observe firsthand the effects of military exploitation. He sent two checks to Revenue Canada, asking that the smaller one be used only for peaceful development work. He heard nothing further and assumed that both checks flowed into government coffers.

Along with his 1980 tax return he sent only a letter of concern. But with his 1981 return he again enclosed two checks, one for Revenue Canada and a second made out to the Peace Tax Fund. Revenue Canada replied that such a fund did not exist (legally) and demanded payment in full. Dyck then sent the check to the Victoria, B.C.-based Peace Tax Fund and began correspondence with government officials to explain why. "I want to do things correctly and openly," he says.

At the 1983 annual MCC Canada meeting, John R. Dyck (above) told Allan Siebert, "You can't legislate a thing like this. . . . I'm glad the Lord led us to this position."

Now Dyck is expecting a day in court. It is bound to come, since Revenue Canada wants his money and must obtain a court order before garnisheeing his account at the Rosthern Credit Union. The sooner the better, he adds, since it may help establish a right of conscience that would allow other people to divert their hard-earned tax money from bombs to working for peace. He also hopes to find a sympathetic lawyer to handle the case.

"I think a lot of people would rather not talk to me about it," he says, summing up the reaction to his protest. So far, any criticism has been muted, though one friend told him, "I admire you for it, but you're wrong." Paula, his wife, is supportive, but most fellow members at Rosthern Mennonite Church are either uninformed or indifferent.

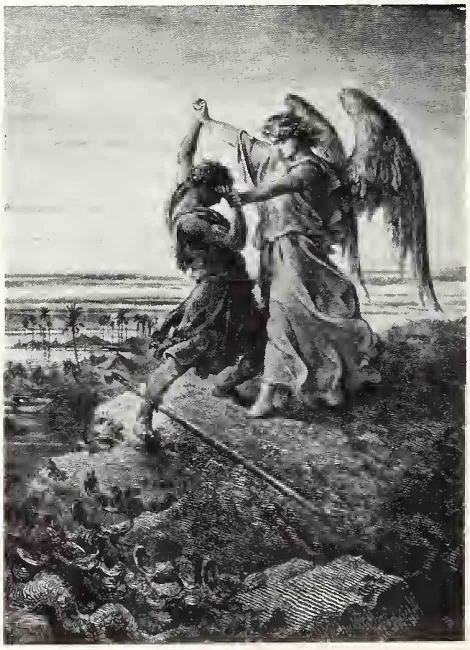
John R. Dyck firmly believes, "We don't need the military." The threat of nuclear war hanging over the world means Christians must resist militarism with renewed vigor. "I see this (nuclear holocaust) coming and we're accountable. The handwriting is on the wall."

Dyck adds that there is a growing network of people asking about the peace tax fund, though the actual number withholding taxes is still small. (Ernie Hildebrand, a teacher at the Swift Current (Sask.) Bible Institute, is another Mennonite who is doing so.) "But people must think this through carefully," Dyck concludes. "You can't legislate a thing like this. . . . I'm glad the Lord led us to this position."

God of Jacob

Diane Mierau Buller

Extrinsic God of Jacob
I too have raged at your silence.
Writhing in your grasp
I have demanded that you bless me.
Hear me, I have shouted
as you have eluded my demands.
Bless me, I will not let you go
until you have blessed me.
But I have learned that in your stillness
You often speak most clearly
God of Jacob
extrinsic no longer.
I crumble at your feet
raging ceased
for by your hand I have learned
the value of silence.



You carry God's image

Ken Peterson

We are made up of chemicals. All of life is built of principally 13 chemical elements. That we are of the "dust" is not in itself overly amazing. So can a statue be formed of the ground. But to take physical elements and create living beings as complex and with the amazing abilities of a human being is a wonder.

Consider the human egg. It contains all the coded building instructions for the development of a complete human being. In that one tiny human egg—the size of a pinhead—are over 500,000 pages worth of information and chemical instructions. Scientists have discovered that the DNA of life is a coded instruction of detailed information. We are planned, and the DNA is but one illustration pointing to our being the product of an amazing Intelligent Designer.

Consider our bodies—created by the Living God. *We have hands.* With them we can grasp things, hold them, move them about, play musical instruments, create beautiful works of art and build buildings and machines. *Consider our bones.* Our body weight is evenly spread out over our bone structure. Every bone in our bodies was designed for a special purpose. Our arms and legs can move in almost every direction because of the ball-and-socket design of our bones. *Consider our muscles.* Six hundred muscles produce our movements. Tiny muscles govern the light permitted into our eyes. Muscles barely an inch long allow for the subtle expressions in our faces. A much larger muscle, the diaphragm, controls coughing, breathing, laughing and sighing. Massive muscles equip the body for walking. Without our muscles, our bones would collapse in a heap, our joints would slip apart, and our movements would cease.

In the skull of our body is a brain. Though our brain weighs only 3.3 pounds, its work is more comprehensive than a telephone exchange requiring 500 tons of equipment. The human mind directs our activity through over 1 billion nerve cells. We can remember the past, plan for the future, make decisions and carry them out. We are inventive, logical, can create languages and increase in learning. One human brain is capable of holding more information than the entire 9 million volumes in the Library of Congress.

Our bodies are created in such a manner as to reflect the image of God. Our bodies are made to be able to create with our hands and to reason and use intelligent language through the use of our minds. This bodily existence is created in such a manner as to house something more intangible and more profound than even our creative intelligence. We are created in such a manner as to house a living soul.

The soul of human beings is that which makes us self-conscious—aware of ourselves as persons. Soul gives us feelings of anger, fear, guilt, well-being, tenderness, helplessness, power, joy, sorrow, defensiveness and peace. Soul gives us a sense of oughtness. We have a moral nature which compels us to choose and understand right from wrong. Soul means we have an awareness of God.

We have a spiritual nature making it possible for our spirit to communicate with other spirits and with the Spirit of God. We are able to fellowship and worship. We are created with the unique ability to communicate in a spiritual way with one another and with God. Our spiritual or soul nature reflects the spiritual or soul nature of the Creator.

"So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them" (Genesis 1:27). Your body, your mind, your soul/spirit reflects the image of God. Therefore, dedicate your body, your mind and your soul to God. Choose to reflect the image of God by your doing, your thinking and in your being. Be recreated, be renewed in your being, be cleansed from the sin that mars your reflection of God's image. In Christ the image of God is born anew. *Ninth in a series on Genesis*

Ken Peterson is pastor of the First Mennonite Church, 379 N. Campus Ave., Box 338, Upland, CA 91786.

PERSONAL

I believe in life for all

Timothy Strunk

January 1982 was a worrisome month for my wife and me. We were concerned about my wife's second full-term pregnancy. There were small indications that the baby might be in trouble and that the pregnancy might not end with a normal delivery. We wanted to avoid a Caesarian section, but if it was necessary we could accept it. Her second pregnancy had ended in the eleventh week with a miscarriage, and that experience had filled us with apprehension during her next.

It was unneeded worry. Our son was born in early February, vaginally and in good health. It was, as with our first child, a time which drew my wife and me closer, making parenthood once again an integral part of our love.

Having experienced the death of a fetus, I understand those who view abortion as the death of a child. And, for the people who advocate the rights of the preborn, I have an appreciation for the depth of their commitment to life.

But children are a concern even after they're born. The love and concern and hope with which we try to surround their lives continues past those in-utero months. It's a consuming task that humbles and frustrates as well as rewards.

In January I also did a small thing that required little of my time but brought up a gnawing question for me. I collected house to house for the March of Dimes, an organization working for the health of the unborn and for those children born with birth defects. How could I, in good conscience, ask people to donate small amounts of money to the health of future generations when, year after year, I contribute thousands to a cause that promises they will have no future?

The Reagan administration, with its wholesale endorsement of nuclear weapons, unlimited weapon sales and abandonment of human rights, has sharpened the debate within me as to what kind of parent I really am. I'm concerned about the welfare of the preborn and worry about the times my children will face. But when confronted with encompassing governmental policies that hasten the destruction of the earth, my concern extends not only to the preborn but to the preconceived, to the children that my children will have.

Ronald Reagan has repeatedly stated that the fetus should be protected, but his policies present a crude betrayal of the pro-life movement.

Yet I hear no denouncement or even dismay of his position toward humankind (with its defense-and-destruction-no-matter-what-the-cost aspect) from these pro-life people. If he's willing to endorse the protection of life for nine months, that seems to be good enough for many of us. The dimensions of the threat of his relentless pursuit of nuclear, chemical and biological warfare is somehow put aside by us, as though the decisions we make will not become the crushing burdens of succeeding generations. The continuing and expanding commitment to worldwide oblivion and the resulting diminished value of human life is evidently accepted as not threatening those very lives we mean so much to protect.

While the topic of MX missles may seem too serious to make fun of it, sometimes "spoofs" like this one in Pasadena, Calif., can help us relax and begin to think more sanely.

YOU TOO, CAN HAVE ONE IN YOUR BACKYARD!
MX
MX
MX
SEQUOYAH SCHOOL PASADENA, CALIF.
BLESSED ARE THE "PEACEKEEPERS"

As I think about it now, I wonder how I could have asked my neighbors for money to further research that is to save the lives of our children and their future, and then leave in silence without mentioning the adminstration's disastrous and contradictory goals. As I think about it now, I wonder how my children will be able to discern that I consider life precious beyond cost, that I hold to biblical beliefs that encourage love of enemies as though they were neighbors, that my moral convictions in daily life compel me to live without attitudes of racial hatred, when this year alone I will give $1,600 in support of national goals that include worldwide nuclear supremacy by my country? How can I do that and claim to love my children and my children's children?

Timothy Strunk, a woodworker, 22 Kensington Park, Arlington, MA 02174, wrote this about a year ago. Tim's home church is East Swamp in Quakertown, Pa., but he is now a member of a Congregational church in Arlington.

Our young people surprised me

Jim Amstutz

When asked to organize three youth seminars on the military draft for Bethlehem '83, I consented. It is my job to do such workshops. But I was skeptical. Why put forth the effort? The draft isn't the hot issue it was three years ago at the Estes Park General Conference gathering or even two years ago at the Bowling Green Mennonite Church General Assembly. Regulations are finalized for both classification and alternative service, the non-registration issue isn't novel anymore and no one is predicting the return of the draft for at least two years. Who is going to be interested in another draft seminar? Fred Loganbill (GC peace and justice office) and I predicted there would be very few.

Imagine our surprise when 88 youth filed into our first meeting. They were mostly male—of draft age— and *keenly* interested in the current status of the draft. We called in Irv Bomburger (National Interreligious Service Board of Conscientious Objectors staff) for reinforcement.

On the second day of seminars 120 youth anxiously awaited our input. What was happening? Sixty more youth attended the final seminar. What were these young people asking?

1. **Conscientious objection.** Is there a C.O. provision available? What kind of work will I do in alternative service? Are you assigned a job or can you choose? Questions about registering as a conscientious objector, building a C.O. file and facing the draft board were also part of this discussion.

Observation. There is a new group of 16-, 17- and 18-year-olds who have not been part of the draft discussion since 1980. They are asking the kind of basic questions many of us thought we had made clear earlier. We cannot assume that one or two meetings on the draft on a Sunday evening at church are sufficient. Those needing preregistration draft counseling need to know where to find answers. Those appointed to be congregational draft counselors tell me young people aren't coming to them for counsel. I believe we should take the initiative and contact them. Take the time necessary to hear the questions youth are asking.

2. **Non-registration.** Why do non-registrants draw the line where they do? What are the chances of prosecution? Don't Mennonites have an obligation to their country? What about non-combatant service? Should I feel guilty if I register?

This textured photo of a child survivor from the atomic bombing of Hiroshima—which caused the deaths of more than 140,000 people—is a grim reminder of the fruits of war.

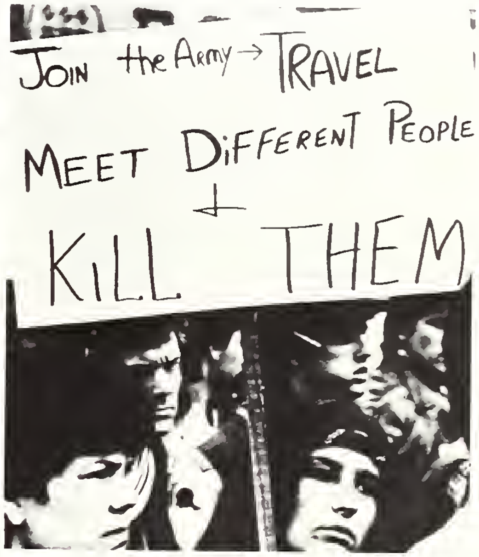
Our young people are concerned not to contribute to the scars of the world. But they want our help in making conscience choices for which they cannot yet see the outcomes.

Observation. These youth were not asking if they should participate in war or not. They were asking instead the question of where to draw the line along the continuum of conscientious objection to participation in war. When one seminar group was asked what reasons they have heard in support of non-registration, their list was impressive.

Many shared openly their justification for choosing one path or the other. Are we ready to encourage this struggle of conscience and affirm a decision that may contradict our personal positions? We can affirm the fact that the registrant who pursues C.O. status and the non-registrant are both refusing to allow themselves to be trained for war in the nuclear age. Non-registrants at conference—with support from their registrant friends—called for a church-wide study on church/state relations. These youth are writing the next chapter of Mennonite history vis-a-vis military conscription. Have we heard their concern?

3. **Personal involvement.** Will women be drafted? When will there be a draft? What will be the reasons for a draft and where will I be sent?

Observation. I sensed a feeling of anxiety among those raising these questions. The draft has been talked about since these youth were in junior high school. They never paid much attention, however, since the decision could be postponed. But now it begins to affect their college and career plans. How seriously will the draft disrupt their lives? Our youth need support in monitoring current events and integrating global realities with Christian imperatives.



The Bethlehem '83 experience has given me a fresh perspective on Mennonite youth and renewed energy in my work. I had begun to take peace education for granted. I believe youth will respond to caring adults who are willing to share in their struggle concerning registration, conscientious objection and Christian discipleship. Witnessing to Christ's way of peace to our young people is not an option, it's an obligation.

Jim Amstutz serves in the draft counseling office of MCC U.S. Peace Section, 21 S. 12th St., Akron, PA 17501.

A Transatlantic Peace Sunday has been set for Oct. 16 by the German Mennonite Peace Committee, which is inviting all churches and Christian groups on both sides of the Atlantic to hold special worship services and public actions to witness to a common faith and show a common opposition to the deployment of the Cruise and Pershing II missiles in Germany by the United States. For suggested resources for observance of Transatlantic Peace Sunday, write MCC U.S. Peace Section, 21 S. 12th St., Akron, PA 17501.

Dutch Mennonites have begun a drive to collect funds for major repairs to two monuments to the early Mennonite movement. The monuments are the "hidden church" at Pingjum and the Menno Simons monument in Witmarsum. Repair work is already under way, reports Ed van Straten of Algemene Doopsgezinde Societeit, the organization of Dutch Mennonites,and will cost approximately $113,000. Those wishing to make contributions may send checks to Mennonite Central Committee, 21 S. 12th St., Akron, PA 17501, designated for "Dutch monument restoration."

NEWS

MWC executive looks to Strasbourg and beyond

Lombard, Ill. (MWC)—Meeting in San Pedro Sula, Honduras, July 13-15, the Mennonite World Conference executive committee approved plans for Strasbourg 1984, encouraged Mennonites in Canada to consider extending an invitation for a 1990 MWC assembly and waxed philosophical about the direction MWC might take thereafter.

As part of a separate discussion about the future of the General Council structure, it was also decided to go ahead with plans to hold the next General Council meeting in the Paraguayan Chaco in 1987.

Financial planning for the XI Assembly occupied the largest amount of committee time. A budget of 3,965,400 French francs was approved. Registration fees will cover the major cost of the assembly. A basic registration price for the conference and all meals will be $115.

The fluctuating value of the franc in relation to the dollar will be a major concern of MWC executive secretary Paul Kraybill and MWC treasurer Ray Schlichting in the upcoming year. It was decided that MWC will reserve the right to bill registrants an additional amount if there is a reduction of more than 10 percent in the value of their registration payment *before* it is received in the MWC office. Once the registration payment is received, however, the fluctuations will be the responsibility of MWC.

A separate travel fund budget of $170,000 was approved. It is hoped that this amount will pay for the travel costs of 123 people from economically deprived countries. Included in this figure are provisions for 75 General Council members, a 10-member choir from Zaire, eight delegates from the Soviet Union (their attendance is not yet confirmed) and another 30 people who will be invited to speak, lead interest groups or attend a special mission consultation to be held prior to the XI Assembly.

Recognizing that the General Council members appointed by the conferences are almost exclusively men, the executive committee also approved a goal that at least 15 women receive travel expenses.

Part of the Strasbourg program has been finalized. Choirs from Taiwan, Zaire, the United States, Canada, France, Germany and Belgium will sing at the plenary sessions. Other music presentations will include "The Abiding Place," an oratorio by Esther Wiebe and Barbara Smucker, and a concert by the Palatinate Orchestra under the direction of Jürgen Haury. Children's presentations will be shaped around the theme of "stones"—"living stones," "stones by the Jordan," "stones and bread," "throw no stones."

Major addresses around the conference theme "God's People Serve in Hope" will fall into four categories: heritage and identity, mission, servanthood and reconciliation. Invitations to major speakers have not yet been confirmed, but Paul Kraybill noted that the program committee is trying to avoid an approach to selecting speakers that results in their being viewed as "superstars" of the Mennonite world. In several instances, two or three people will be asked to make a joint presentation.

The committee considered briefly the question of making official MWC statements, particularly in light of the growing concern worldwide and especially in Europe about the arms race. The committee reaffirmed its X Assembly policy that MWC will not issue official statements,but recognized that individuals and groups will have access to a daily news sheet to share their concerns and that they are free to call special gatherings.

Looking beyond the Strasbourg assembly, the committee started by considering a XII Assembly in 1990. In so doing, several members responded to those who have wondered why there isn't more serious consideration of having a world conference in the so-called Third World.

The problems of facilities, language and travel planning would simply be too great to have a conference (for example) in Indonesia, said president Charles Christano. "We are not ready." Christano said he had received phone calls in Indonesia about this subject from some who are prone to "romanticize" about a Third World conference. The only such country which might be a possible host would be India, he suggested.

But there the currency problem would be formidable, responded Indian member P. J. Malagar, vice president for Asia. Nor are Mennonite churches located in the larger cities. He has told his constituents it is "not possible" yet for them to host a world conference—at least in the way world conferences are currently conceived and executed.

Both Christano and Malagar had considerable difficulties just getting to the much smaller meeting in San Pedro Sula. Christano missed the first half of the meetings due to visa problems, a schedule mix-up and limited availability of flights. Malagar had to "sit in the

A new Mennonite Your Way Directory IV will be published in March 1984. Leon and Nancy Stauffer, originators of the Mennonite Your Way program, say the directory—covering 1984, 1985 and 1986—will highlight travel to Mennonite World Conference being held July 25-29, 1984, in Strasbourg, France. Anyone wishing to become part of the Mennonite Your Way hospitality network should request an application form immediately from *Mennonite Your Way IV*, Box 1525, Salunga, PA 17538. Registration closes Nov. 30.

A United Methodist congregation in New Haven, Conn., backing their pastor's right to refuse paying federal taxes for military use, has declined to turn over his salary to the Internal Revenue Service. Carl Lundborg, pastor of First and Summerfield United Methodist Church, has withheld federal income taxes in both 1981 and 1982, telling the IRS his "obligations as a Christian and as a citizen are no longer reconcilable. The 50 percent of my taxes that support the military I cannot pay." IRS ordered the church to withhold the pastor's salary until the amount was paid. But church members voted on July 10 to reject IRS's demand.

Approximately 40 major and minor armed conflicts exist in the world today, according to the Center for Defense Information in Washington in its survey entitled "A World of War—1983." The conflicts involve 45 of the world's 164 countries. Over 4 million soldiers are directly engaged in combat. And hundreds of thousands of people have been killed, maimed or displaced. The international arms trade grew from $6 billion in 1970 to $50 billion in 1980. The most rapid growth was with Third World countries.

U.S. Embassy" in Calcutta for two days in order to get his visa. The travel problems experienced here and in Nairobi in 1981 would make a Third World conference extremely difficult.

Jacob Pauls, member-at-large from Winnipeg, indicated that he felt confident that an invitation to meet in Winnipeg in 1990 could now be brought to the General Council for consideration at Strasbourg. There was consensus that after 1990, other models of meeting together, possibly on a smaller scale, should be considered.

There should be a limit to how MWC serves the "yearning of North Americans to travel," said secretary Robert Kreider. We also need to understand that our experience of meeting with the congregation in San Pedro Sula [which happened right before the executive committee meeting] was also "Mennonite World Conference," Kreider said.

"We are almost forced into being a 'people's congress' because we are becoming stronger in so many different parts of the world," observed Marvin Hein, vice president for North America.

Feeling that the appointment of an executive secretary for 1984-1990 should not wait until the General Council session in Strasbourg, the executive committee appointed Paul Kraybill to another six-year term for that period. A three-month sabbatical was granted for January-March 1985. Kraybill will coordinate the planning of the assembly in 1990 from the MWC office in Lombard, Ill. The office in Strasbourg will be closed Dec. 31, 1984.

Executive committee members (left to right) P. J. Malagar, vice president for Asia; Robert Kreider, secretary; and Charles Christano, president

A new membership policy was adopted which will henceforth limit full membership in MWC to "groups of congregations in conferences or associations or similar bodies with a membership of at least 500." This will not apply to smaller bodies who are already full members. Associate membership will be available for bodies of at least 10 members who would otherwise qualify for full membership but don't meet the size requirements. Associates can be observers at General Council meetings, be listed in the Mennonite World Directory and receive materials.

Many new groups are interested in relating to MWC but are not organized as traditional conferences, said Kraybill. Associate membership will open participation to them.

Also on the agenda was a report by Paul Kraybill on his visit to Paraguay immediately prior to the executive committee meeting, especially as it related to allegations that Paraguayan Mennonites have harbored a Nazi war criminal, Josef Mengele.

Kraybill reported on several meetings with nine different Mennonite leaders of both church and local government, some based in Filadelfia, where Mengele was allegedly sighted. Simon Wiesenthal, a hunter of Nazi war criminals, has claimed that "the Mennonites in Filadelfia" have not denied his allegations, but all nine of these men uniformly denied any knowledge that Mengele had been in Filadelfia, said Kraybill.

The executive committee asked Kraybill to write a letter to Wiesenthal at his office in Austria conveying this denial.

As of March 31, the combined deficits for the MWC operating account and the XI Assembly account stood at $55,000. Most of the loss is to be made up from XI Assembly proceeds. *Bruce Leichty*

The Neil Avenue Mennonite Church in Columbus, Ohio, is inviting parents of students and young adults living in Columbus to a special weekend Oct. 22-23. Parents, pastors and students may send names of people they know who have moved to Columbus. Write to Student Young Adult Commission, Neil Avenue Mennonite Church, 251 W. Sixth Ave., Columbus, OH 43201.

"Hope—Light Amid Darkness" was the theme of the *Your Time* radio programs of Mennonite Board of Missions Aug. 1-5 when speaker Margaret Foth interviewed Chuck Neufeld, assistant director of Mennonite Voluntary Service. He is also a singer. Each *Your Time* program during the week featured his music. The five, four-minute programs are available for $5 from MBM, 1251 Virginia Ave., Harrisonburg, VA 22801. They can be used as a resource for study, discussion or reflection on hope and happiness.

Wearing clothes, eating food and hearing music from another culture are ways to come closer to other people in the world, without actually traveling across the globe. These experiences are helpful to people of all ages, believes Joanne Hess Siegrist of Bird in Hand, Pa. She initiated an International Clothing Loan Closet to be used by those seriously studying other cultures and mission exchange. It is hoped the clothing will be used in Sunday schools, summer Bible schools, in worship services, and in family and community events. For information write MCC SELFHELP Crafts, 240 N. Reading Road, Ephrata, PA 17522.

AEM studies discipleship

Campinas, Brazil (GCMC)—Sermons, sports, fellowship, good food, new songs, prayer times, reports, interest groups, communion—all in four full days, July 28-31, at Camp Bethel near here.

Nearly 130 people attending the Assembly 1983 represented all five regions of the Association of Evangelical Mennonites in Brazil. Only one of the 25 pastors was not present, and only one of the 26 churches was not represented. Participants were of all ages—men, women and children.

Featured speaker Edson Barbosa of Cruzada Estudantil (Inter-Varsity) spoke six times on the subject "Discipleship—the Dynamic Life in the Spirit of God." The official hymn of the asembly was composed by Michelle Schwartzentruber Rizoli of Campinas, using the words of Matthew 28:19. Pastor João Fernando de Andrade of São Paulo led the team that planned the assembly.

At the business meeting, the association's bylaws were approved (last year a constitution was passed) and delegates endorsed a confession of faith as well as the annual budget.

A day prior to the assembly, the national directory met and chose Osvaldo Pereira de Freitas of Gama, president of the AEM, as the Brazilian delegate to the General Council of the Mennonite World Conference. Some plans were also made concerning the Congress of Latin American Mennonites of the Southern Cone which will be held in Brazil in January 1984. Pastor Peter Siemens is the official AEM representative.

The camp's facilities were stretched beyond its limits as many more people came than had been expected. Floors and cars were used for sleeping. However, many expressed their appreciation for this type of annual conference, begun three years ago at the 25th anniversary of Mennonite work in Brazil.

COM personnel gather for annual orientation/retreat

Lancaster, Pa.—What do 50 missionaries, candidates and Commission on Overseas Mission staff discuss and study when they spend a week together? The annual orientation/retreat for COM personnel was held the week before Bethlehem '83 at Elizabethtown College near Lancaster, Pa.

One of the main subjects was conflict management. Ronald S. Kraybill, director of Mennonite Conciliation Services, led the group in discovering how they react to conflicts. Although conflicts are resolved differently in various cultures, each missionary faces conflicts within himself and with other people.

Each day, time was spent in prayer and discussion of *Sharing the Gospel*, a book written by Robert Ramseyer for *The Foundation Series*. Robert and his wife, Alice Ruth, led these studies.

Jim Bertsche of Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission, Hershey Lehman of Eastern Mennonite Board and Edgar Stoesz of Mennonite Central Committee pointed out trends in inter-Mennonite cooperation overseas. Traditional distinctives between mission boards and MCC are disappearing. A high level of cooperation among Mennonite mission agencies is experienced in Africa. In Botswana all Mennonites work together as one agency registered with the government.

For a number of years COM has followed the policy of working with established national churches (except in Mexico). Erwin Rempel, COM executive secretary, led a discussion on a question posed by Donald McGavran in the recent publication, "Are Missions Shackled to the National Church?" Missionaries are not always sure how much initiative they should take in church planting and evangelism when the national church gives higher priority to its own maintenance and biological growth than to outreach.

What churches in North America want to hear and need to hear from missionaries was a subject that provoked much thought. Is overseas work perceived as being more wholistic than that of the sending churches? How can missionaries help North Americans gain a better understanding of realities in the Third World? It was pointed out that women who speak and preach from pulpits in overseas churches are not always permitted to do so in North American churches.

Issues that relate to peace are perceived differently in various countries.

Angela Rempel

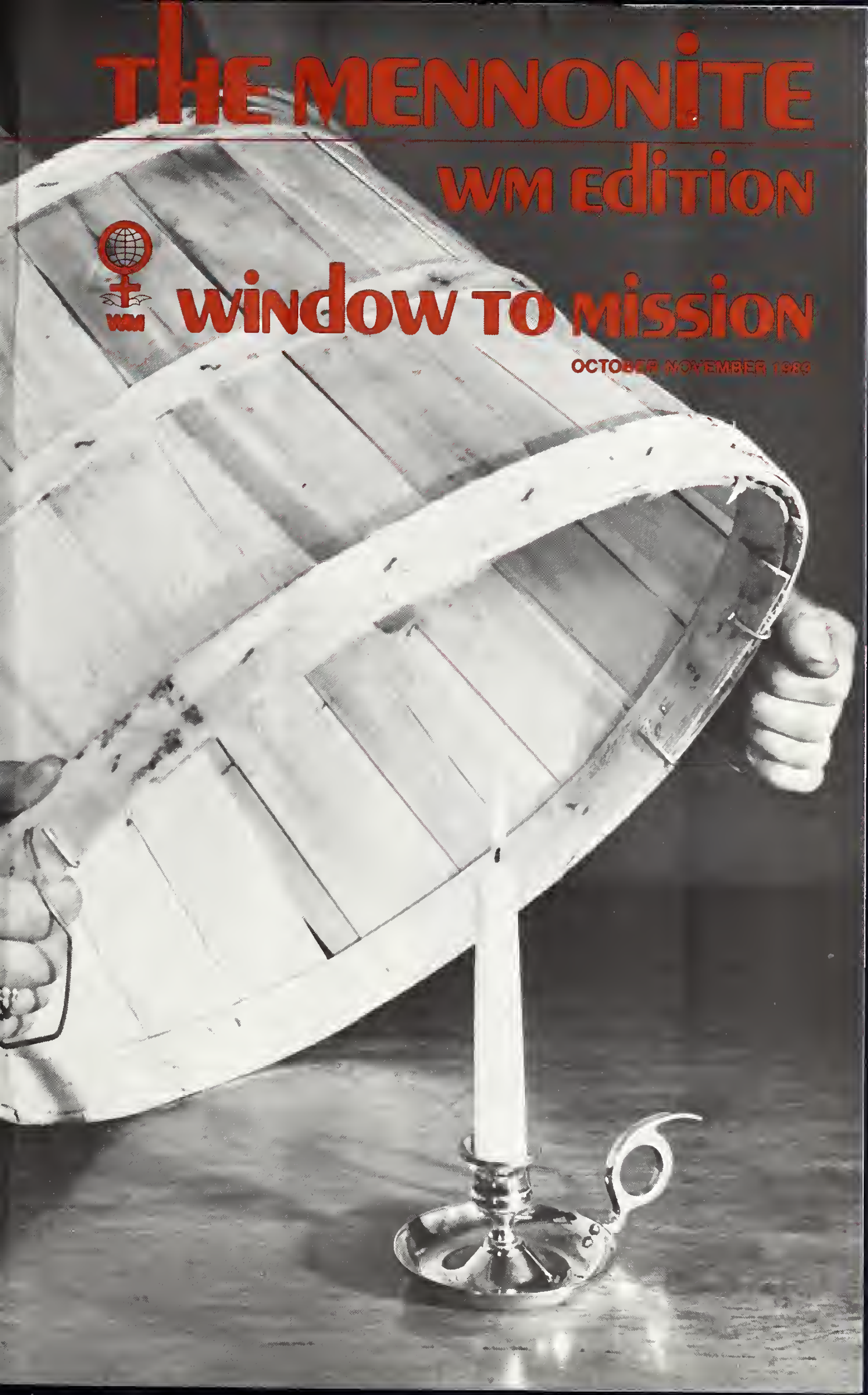
Administrators and missionaries in group discussion at missionary retreat, Elizabethtown, Pa.

THE MENNONITE

WM EDITION

window TO MISSION

OCTOBER NOVEMBER 1989



THE OPEN WINDOW

As I sat at my typewriter editing articles for this issue of *Window to Mission*, more than once a lump came to my throat, tears welled up in my eyes. I felt the loneliness Gail Wiebe must have experienced in Upper Volta. I empathized with former missionary Adah Wenger when she faced widowhood and approaching motherhood far away in India.

Throughout our lives we face many problems, conflicts, and frailties. Often it seems impossible to rise above them. It would almost seem easier to crawl into a hole, pull in the dirt, and pretend they will all go away!

Maybe one of the most exciting aspects of reaching middle age is the life perspective one can have. As one looks back over one's Christian pilgrimage, the ups and downs, the tears and smiles, one becomes more and more aware of how God has been at work in all of life.

In the book *Epistles Now* by Leslie Brandt, the author paraphrases Romans 5 and states well in one brief paragraph what comes from a middle-aged perspective also. "It is when we accept and cling to what God has done for us through Christ, irrespective of our human feelings and frailties, that the very conflicts that beset us, and may even threaten to destroy us, *become God's tools to grind and polish and temper our spirits and prepare us for loving and obedient service.*"

Praise God! Praise God!

—Jeannie Zehr

COVER

You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hid. Nor do men light a lamp and put it under a bushel, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven. Matthew 5:14-16 (RSV)

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Kecho—

a Senufo hostess

Gail Wiebe

WHEN THE KOTOURA village chief became too old to continue making village decisions, Kecho's husband, Kunandi, became acting chief. It was to Kecho and Kunandi's home that Anne Garber, my co-worker here in Upper Volta, and I were led when we visited Kotoura. It was Kecho who prepared the french-fried yams and rice that were placed on the ground before us after we greeted Kunandi and the village elders.

We felt welcomed and decided to make our home in Kotoura. During the past six or more months we have continued to eat with the family, contributing to the family pantry, and at times preparing dishes for them to try. Kecho has learned to eat green salad with oil dressing and banana bread. I have learned to eat corn or millet mush dipped in meat, leaf, or vegetable sauces.

For several months I ate mush the wrong way until one day one of Kecho's daughters-in-law said in mock sternness, "You're going to have to wash dishes!" Then Kecho showed me how to pull off a clump of mush so there was no remnant left to dry hard on the side of the bowl.

During a meal if we get carried away in conversation we are warned that we better not talk too much or the food will be gone before we are filled.

Kecho gently encourages me to feel at home here. Late one morning when Anne had been gone on vacation for two weeks and Kecho knew I was lonely, she stopped by my study spot under a shade tree at the edge of the village. "Can't you come and sit at our house and read instead of sitting over here all alone?" she asked. Tears welled up in my eyes as I followed her into the village where I got no reading done.

Early in our stay Kecho sent over a bowl of porridge for our breakfast. When I stopped in her yard later that morning, I wanted to tell her I had "drunk" the porridge. "*Nda gba-un* . . . (pause and start again) . . . *Nda gba-un gba*," I said. I saw her face screw up as she stifled a giggle. I laughed because I couldn't say anything, and then Kecho laughed.

That halting, mispronounced sen-

Kecho pounding grain for the evening mush

tence has been repeated tens of times and savored as people here know how to savor a funny moment. Now I am introduced to newcomers, not by name, but with the telling of several stories of our life together.

The warm, friendly laughter encourages me to be more bold in learning the Senufo language, as does Kecho's willingness to use her limited knowledge of the market language, Jula, to communicate with me when I just can't understand what she has said in Senufo. Her daughters-in-law burst out with laughter when she speaks Jula, repeating each mistake Kecho makes, but I feel that if a leading village woman doesn't mind making mistakes, then why should I?

One day I overheard Kecho's daughters-in-law ask her if she was going to "enter into these new prayers" about which Anne and I spoke. Kecho thoughtfully shook her head and explained that she had not been able to enter the Muslim prayers with her husband, and she still couldn't give up the religion with which she had grown up.

When I find it difficult to hope, I know it is the Holy Spirit who reminds me that it takes a special work of the Spirit for every person that comes to God; this includes Kecho.

In Touch with Need

Ruth Unrau

IT WAS DURING my first visit to the Naledi Adult Education Centre, Gaborone, Botswana, that I knew I wanted to work there. I was drawn to the headmistress. Mrs. Kasai is a black South African of indeterminate age, perhaps in her early forties. She is the initiator and innovator of the school.

Mrs. Kasai and her husband, originally from Zaire and a local minister, started the school when they realized that the children of this poor section of Gaborone were unable to go to school. The government schools had no place for them. Some were overage, some had no money, and some were too timid to venture out.

The school began under a tree and has grown to eight classrooms, but it is still poor. It is unable to get government aid. Some children are admitted even though they cannot pay the fees.

The buildings have been funded by churches overseas. It is more difficult to find money for the regular expenses of teachers' salaries. An organization of expatriate women has made a commitment to raise the salary money for the ten teachers. I have been the treasurer of this organization.

Women in Mission has made a fund available to help the teachers upgrade their teaching skills. None have had professional training.

Mrs. Kasai is in touch with the problems of the community. The Old Naledi residents cross the schoolyard going from one neighborhood to another, and they stop to talk with her about their domestic and economic problems.

An old man in a coat with shredded sleeves asks if she can find a new coat for him. Mrs. Kasai asks if the Mennonites have any blankets for her destitute old people. "They are so cold; they cannot sleep."

All the bales we have are spoken for, and I tell her I will try for some next year. I think of the nice clothes in the thrift shops across the United States and Canada, and I wish those clothes were here.

A Day at the Seminary Nursery

Lois Barrett

TODAY IS WEDNESDAY. At 8:15 a.m. teachers Joy Rogers and Jan Lugibihl unlock the doors of the Cooperative Nursery at the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries in Elkhart, Indiana. By 8:30, when classes for their parents start across the campus, about a dozen children have arrived and begun riding on kiddie cars, working puzzles, climbing in the loft, and playing house.

By snack time at 9:45, there are twenty-one children at the nursery, and they are now divided into two classes. The three- to five-year-olds and Joy are making caterpillars out of cardboard egg cartons and pipe cleaners.

In the toddlers' room, Jan and two parent volunteers have some children working with play dough, while others are listening to a story.

By 6:00 p.m., other children have come and gone, and the nursery is closed for the day.

The Cooperative Nursery serves children ages six months to six years while their parents (all students, faculty, or staff at the seminary) are in class, studying, or at work.

Some children are at the nursery as little as three hours a week; one parent may be a student while the other audits one class. Other children may be in the nursery more than thirty hours a week if one parent is a full-time student and the other parent works full time. Some children have parents both of whom are students.

Total enrollment at the Cooperative Nursery grew from twenty in spring of 1979 to forty-five in the spring of 1983. Part of the increase has been because of the increase in student enrollment at the seminary. Part of it has been for economic reasons which put one spouse to work while the other is a student.

The cooperative nature of the nursery means that, in addition to the part-time paid staff, child-care givers are parents, mothers or fathers, who volunteer an hour and a half a week at the nursery.

A parent committee hires staff and administers the nursery. In addition to parents, other students at the seminary volunteer time. So parents know the people who are taking care of their children and have a say in the kind of care that is given.

The large number of volunteers means that costs to parents are kept low—last year, eighty cents for each hour-and-a-half period for the first child in the family, and seventy-five cents for the second child.

The seminary donates space and utilities. Monetary donations have come from the seminary, Women in Mission, the Women's Missionary and Service Commission, and from an annual bake sale.

As enrollment in the nursery has grown, space in the basement of an apartment building on campus has grown too small. The cooperative is looking forward to more space, since the seminary boards recently gave preliminary approval to a building project for nursery and student housing.

Toddlers playing on nursery playground. From left are Megan Bauman, Benjamin Myers, and Chris Kuhns.

THE COM CONNECTION

Our guest columnist for this issue is Angela Rempel, former missionary to Brazil. Last spring Angela and her husband, Erwin, who is the executive secretary of the Commission on Overseas Mission, visited our mission fields throughout Asia.

SEVERAL WOMEN had shown interest in learning how to make sponge cake when Marietta Sawatzky took some to a function at their church in Taipei, Taiwan. Since there are not adequate kitchen facilities at the church where the women meet monthly for Bible study, Marietta invited them to her apartment home for a demonstration along with the Bible study.

As the seven women of various ages came, they first sipped tea while the young children were shown some toys. In the kitchen they gathered around eagerly as the procedure was explained and demonstrated. Some were curious enough to open the refrigerator and cupboards.

One baby became fussy so his grandmother put him on her back with a big piece of pink material made especially for that purpose. After about two turns around the kitchen, he was sound asleep and slept quietly the rest of the time.

While the cake was in the oven Marietta led a study on Ruth and Naomi. The women didn't need much encouragement to share their experiences and thoughts on that subject. In Taiwan the daughter-in-law has traditionally been responsible to her mother-in-law.

One young woman related how the testimony of a Christian sister-in-law who is unable to bear children was a positive influence in the recent decision she and her husband made to follow Christ.

The cake turned out fine, and everyone gathered around to have a picture taken.

Before they left, Marietta showed the women the 400 pair of nylon, Chinese-style pajama trousers that a non-Christian lady had recently given to her. Only a few pair were claimed that day.

When the three Sawatzky children came home from the Christian school which they attend, they brought word that any number of trousers could be donated through the school to help the poor people on another island. This was good news. Since Taiwan prides itself that there is no poverty there, Marietta had been unsure of how she would ever dispose of the 400 trousers!

Marietta later reported that nearly 200 of the trousers went to the poor people on Orchid Island, 100 pairs went to the black-foot disease patients being helped by the Mustard Seed organization, with about 30 local church women accepting the rest.

Marietta and her Bible study group

PROGRAM 2

TRAINING FOR MISSION

Alice Ruth Ramseyer

WHAT HAPPENS after a person hears God's call to mission service and responds by applying to the General Conference Commission on Overseas Mission (COM)?

Nancy and Perry Ferris did just that. COM accepted them and asked them to spend a year in preparation at the Mission Training Center in Elkhart, Indiana.

David Bergen applied to COM in the Overseas Mission Volunteer program and asked if he could first spend a year in study at the seminary in Elkhart.

Bob and Jayne Dambam returned to the United States after three years with the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) in Nigeria. In their debriefing it was suggested that they might spend a year at seminary before returning to Nigeria.

Leah Sonwani came from India to study theology at the seminary.

Claire and Harlan de Brun in a Baptist church in Maine where he was pastor began reading books about the Anabaptist-Mennonite understanding of Christian faith. They too wrote to COM and are now in Lesotho. These and others were students this past year in Mission Training Center courses.

Missionaries and mission boards have long realized the need for training in sharing the good news effectively. The Mission Training Center is the agency for training workers preparing for service with COM and the Board of Missions of the Mennonite Church (MBM), and is part of the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries (AMBS) in Elkhart, Indiana.

To get a picture of this program for you, I talked with persons involved in it. Robert Ramseyer, a missionary in Japan until he came to serve as director in 1972, is the present director.

During the years 1978-82 Ramseyer was again in Japan, and the director was Roelf Kuitse from the Netherlands, a former missionary in Indonesia and Ghana.

INTERVIEWER: **How do people enter the center program?**

ROBERT RAMSEYER: COM and MBM, who, together with the seminaries, support and administer the center, send candidates here to study. MCC may encourage workers to come; others from other boards, or persons not yet affiliated with a board come on their own. All courses are also open to students enrolled in the seminary.

INTERVIEWER: **What are the requirements for entrance?**

ROBERT: Normally to enroll in AMBS one needs to be a college graduate, but exceptions are sometimes made.

INTERVIEWER: **I understand that this program is not only for persons going out to serve for the first time.**

ROBERT: That's right. Many persons come after serving a term or more overseas. Some missionaries come on successive furloughs.

It is a valuable way to evaluate one's

past experience through study, and to compare notes with people from other fields. These experienced people are also a valuable resource for those coming without experience.

INTERVIEWER: **What are some of the courses taught in this program?**

ROBERT: The basic course is a two-term one: *The Christian Mission*. First semester we discuss biblical and historical perspectives and second semester, cultural and theological perspectives.

INTERVIEWER: **What other courses are available?**

ROBERT: Cultural Anthropology, Religion and Christian Faith, Evangelism and Church Planting, Islam, and the weekly lunch-hour discussion group, called the MTC Colloqium, which draws interested persons from the entire seminary community.

In addition there is a program called Supervised Experience in Ministry (SEM) which a student can do in mission and in evangelism, as well as in teaching and other areas. There are also occasional seminars, workshops, and special speakers.

INTERVIEWER: **How is one person's study program worked out?**

ROBERT: This is planned through discussion between the student and director, taking into account the student's background and specific needs and interests.

* * * * *

INTERVIEWER: **David, you'll be leaving soon for Kinshasa, Zaire, I understand. What will you be doing there?**

DAVID BERGEN: In this assignment I'll have responsibilities in purchasing and shipping for Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission (AIMM).

INTERVIEWER: **You took the course in Christian mission, I believe. If you were to choose a point or two from the course . . .**

DAVID: We looked at missions in terms of *how* and *why.* I found Roland Allen's book, *Missionary Methods: St. Paul's or Ours*, even though written many years ago, still very stimulating. We talked about cultural issues—how to communicate the gospel message without one's own culture becoming a stumbling block.

INTERVIEWER: **Did you also look at Mennonite missionary history?**

DAVID: Yes, we talked about the ups and downs of Mennonites in mission. The early Anabaptists encouraged every believer to be an active missionary.

It was unfortunate that persecution and ostracism quenched that fire for witnessing and led the church to a concern for safety and purity which led to closed communities. It was not until the mid-nineteenth century that Mennonites began to again think about mission.

INTERVIEWER: **You said earlier that the course in evangelism taught by Leland Harder gave you a good perspective on sharing the good news.**

DAVID: We studied McGavran's principles of church growth. The importance of using tools of analysis for strategy is one I'll remember.

INTERVIEWER: **Jayne and Bob, what will you be doing when you go back to Nigeria?**

BOB DAMBAM: We'll be living in

Zaire, and I'll be involved in organizing a cassette ministry for Hope for the Blind. I've also been asked to give some spiritual leadership within the church there.

JAYNE: With the two boys I will have plenty to do, but I also want to do some part-time service. There are lots of opportunities.

INTERVIEWER: **In what ways did you find your courses helpful this past year?**

BOB: I got some tools for inductive Bible study. In missions class we talked about what the gospel is for people of a specific culture. The interterm course in evangelism was helpful.

INTERVIEWER: **Jayne, having a baby this year in addition to being mother to Benjamin, how were you able to participate in seminary activities?**

JAYNE: I audited some courses, and also attended the colloqium. I was surprised when we arrived to discover how strong the women's issue was on campus. It did give me a greater sense of self-worth, and a confidence that I have the ability to do something in mission also.

INTERVIEWER: **Leah, what was your work with the church in India before coming here?**

LEAH SONWANI: I was director of women's work for the conference.

INTERVIEWER: **Are you studying mission with the idea of applying it to evangelism in India?**

LEAH: Not India only, but other countries also. I am interested in serving in another country, perhaps Zaire, but now I am testing with others whether or not that is God's will.

INTERVIEWER: **As a Christian coming from a church begun by the work of missionaries, how does mission look to you?**

LEAH: At some points I can criticize and at some points encourage people. I see mission as a two-way street. The missionary's attitude must be, "I will give you Jesus Christ, and you teach me the way to live as a Christian in your culture."

INTERVIEWER: **Nancy, I understand your assignment became definite during this past year. What will you and Perry be doing?**

NANCY FERRIS: We've been invited by the Tokyo Fellowship of Mennonite Churches to become part of their team.

INTERVIEWER: **You've both mentioned the pressure that seminary life puts on students to put studies first, and the difficulty this can bring to family life? How did you deal with it?**

PERRY: After frustrations first semester, we decided second semester that personal relationships came first. In setting lower study goals, I actually did better academically.

INTERVIEWER: **Bob and Jayne, how do you feel about living in community after being here a year?**

BOB: Being here for only one year, and not having a lot of things, it was good to find people willing to share, and to find people with common interests.

JAYNE: Probably one of the most exciting things about this year was that our enthusiasm for going overseas grew even greater as we talked with others planning to go.

INTERVIEWER: **Claire, what kind of work will you and Harlan do in Lesotho?**

CLAIRE: Our assignment is in ministering to leaders of independent churches, primarily Bible teaching.

INTERVIEWER: **You mentioned that community played an important part in your life here. How did you relate that to mission service?**

CLAIRE: This has been a difficult year for us physically. For instance, Ruthie had an ear infection all fall. We've had to learn to depend on others for help. God has spoken to us through Christian community, and that's been important preparation for service where we'll need to receive as well as give.

INTERVIEWER: **A fundamental point of the Anabaptist-Mennonite vision is the combining of witness and discipleship. How do you feel this has worked out in actual practice?**

HARLAN: It seems to me that evangelism and social action can, and should, exist together, but at times I have felt a pressure to choose one or the other. We need to better integrate these two aspects of Christian faith and life.

* * * * *

Helping missionaries and candidates to gain tools for doing mission, for sharing Christ with others is what the Mission Training Center is all about. Anchored on our unchanging God, the people who are part of his mission must continue to grow and change as they seek to interpret the good news to people in a changing world.

PROGRAM "HOW-TO" IDEAS

1. *Panel discussion:* Present the program as a panel discussion, asking members to represent individuals in the article. Find out more about them—write to them, pray for them.

2. *Role play:* Divide into groups following the panel.

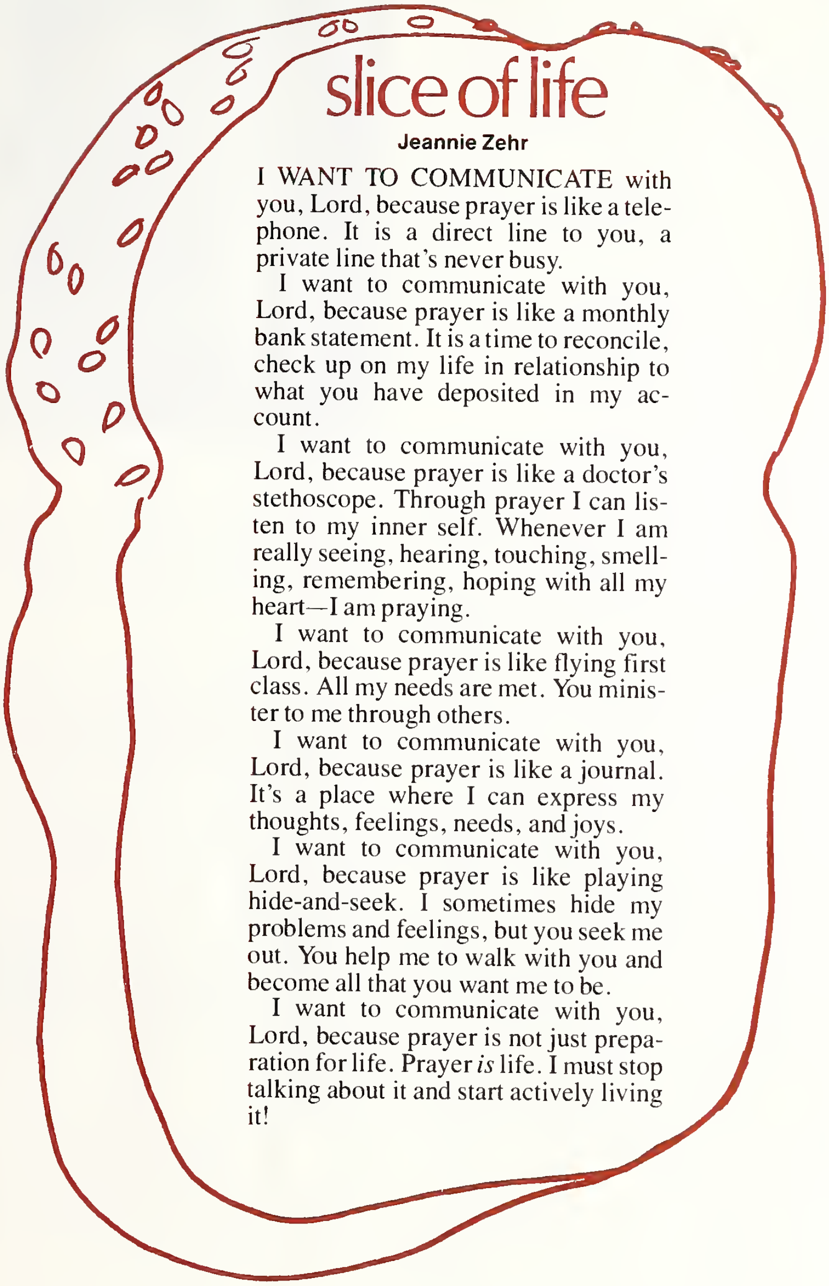
a) A wife and husband with two children are spending a year in the MTC program. What might be a practical schedule of study, housework and baby-sitting?

b) A single woman has returned to North America from a short-term assignment overseas. She would like to return overseas, but is not sure if the Lord is calling her to a preaching ministry. She is spending a year in the MTC program and working on this with COM, her church, family and the church overseas. How can she reach a decision?

c) A missionary family with teenage children are on North America assignment for one year in the MTC program before returning overseas. Can both parents study? How much should they itinerate? Should both husband and wife go? How can the children enjoy the year too?

d) A single man is attending seminary, wondering if he should apply to COM or not. Marriage is not in the picture at present. Should he opt to study toward becoming a pastor or try for overseas? How can he find out what is right for him?

3. For devotions consider using one of the three devotionals available on this theme in the 1983-84 "Devotional/ Resource Packet" available for $2 from the WM Office, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.



slice of life

Jeannie Zehr

I WANT TO COMMUNICATE with you, Lord, because prayer is like a telephone. It is a direct line to you, a private line that's never busy.

I want to communicate with you, Lord, because prayer is like a monthly bank statement. It is a time to reconcile, check up on my life in relationship to what you have deposited in my account.

I want to communicate with you, Lord, because prayer is like a doctor's stethoscope. Through prayer I can listen to my inner self. Whenever I am really seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, remembering, hoping with all my heart—I am praying.

I want to communicate with you, Lord, because prayer is like flying first class. All my needs are met. You minister to me through others.

I want to communicate with you, Lord, because prayer is like a journal. It's a place where I can express my thoughts, feelings, needs, and joys.

I want to communicate with you, Lord, because prayer is like playing hide-and-seek. I sometimes hide my problems and feelings, but you seek me out. You help me to walk with you and become all that you want me to be.

I want to communicate with you, Lord, because prayer is not just preparation for life. Prayer *is* life. I must stop talking about it and start actively living it!

Twenty-first in a Series

A WOMAN IN MISSION:

Adah Wenger

Elinor Kreider

IN HER ROOM at Greencroft Nursing Center, Goshen, Indiana, lives a tiny, white-haired woman and her memories of many years working for the Lord.

Adah Wenger, now well past eighty, was born in Ohio and lived with her family, the Goods, on a farm near Bluffton.

As a young woman her first job was hand folding the printed pages of the *Bluffton News* newspaper. Next she clerked in a Bluffton general store.

Adah's first venture away from home was a summer job at Winona Lake, Indiana, where she worked as a waitress at Kosciusco Lodge. In spite of dire warnings from her well-intentioned mother, she dared to have an evening date of moonlight boating on Winona Lake with a young summer school student, Noah Burkhalter, from nearby Berne.

That fall they both entered Bluffton College, she as a freshman in the Academy, and he as a freshman in college. Their romance blossomed and they discovered that they were both inspired to serve on the mission field in India.

Noah and Adah were married before Adah had finished her schooling, and in 1919 sailed for India where their home was to be in Janjgir, Central Provinces.

In reminiscing, Adah says, "I like to cover our beginning experiences with the words *living*, *loving*, *learning*, and then after some months we were *looking* also—looking forward to the coming of our child to be born around June 30, 1920."

Unfortunately, their joy was cut short. After only seven months in India, Noah became ill and it was discovered that he had fallen victim to the dread typhoid fever. He did not survive the attack, and Adah found herself a young widow in a still strange land, far from her family.

Kind friends on the mission field, especially Mrs. P. A. Penner, and her deep faith in God and his plan for her life carried her through the difficult days of readjustment, coping with her grief and the preparations for the coming baby who would never know his earthly father.

A baby boy whom she named Laurence was born exactly on the day that he was expected. The birth was very difficult and Adah nearly died but recovered with the loving care of her friends. Then the need to care for her little son renewed her courage to carry on.

Eighteen months later Adah and

Laurence returned to Bluffton to live with her family while she fulfilled her dream of returning to college to complete her education.

She and her son then returned to India where a friendship with Paul Wenger, who had gone to India earlier as an agricultural worker, deepened into love and a subsequent marriage.

After many years of service in India the Wengers retired and came back to the United States. They were not content to sit idly so continued to serve in whatever ways they could.

They made their final home in Bluffton, but after Paul's death, Adah decided to move to Greencroft. She became an active associate member and participant in Eighth Street Mennonite Church until poor health made it impossible to continue.

One of Adah's hobbies over the years was that of writing poetry and prose. She has written a lovely book of "memories" for her son and his wife of Ames, Iowa, and their children.

Following is one of her poems written to celebrate the coming of spring and God's message at Easter. She graciously shared it in the Eighth Street Church newsletter.

Gone is the winter—
this is the day
when the joys of
springtime have come.
We greet with a song
the fresh, new dawn.
Life is beautiful!
Love is strong!
In the whole wide world
the most marvelous song
Is to know and feel the
Love that lives on.
Love, perfect Love—
lives on and on.

More about...
Praying for Peace

In the June-July issue of *Window to Mission*, readers were invited to focus their prayer life on world peace. It was suggested that the formation of Peace Covenant Prayer Groups could sharpen that focus through the discipline of praying together.

Perhaps your group would feel some solidarity of purpose with similar groups if there were a shared specific emphasis in our prayers. I would like to suggest that, for a time at least, we give our most urgent attention to praying for our leaders in government. Look to I Timothy 2:1-4 where Paul urges that "petitions, prayers, requests, and thanksgivings be offered to God for all people; for kings and all others who are in authority. . ." TEV. As you pray for those in positions of leadership, whether national, state, provincial or local, you may find it necessary to contact them via letters, phone calls or personal visits. In this way, your prayers can be informed, specific communications with God.

Here are some further suggestions as you pursue your commitment to prayer:

1. At the beginning of your prayer time, take a few moments to release all of your fears and anxieties about our non-peaceful world to God. Really let them go!
2. When your mind is clear of concerns, *listen quietly*. Wait with expectation for God to speak to you.
3. Get a copy of *Celebration of Discipline* by Richard J. Foster (Harper and Row). An enriched prayer life is in store for those who explore and then practice the spiritual disciplines so clearly set forth in this book.

—Lois Schrag

WM office jottings from Joan

This is the end of July! Today I'm writing this page in anticipation of Bethlehem '83 and all of the meaningful experiences that we'll encounter during this memorable week.

One of the things WM anticipates celebrating at the conference is the new book *I Heard Good News Today* written by Cornelia Lehn. It is scheduled to be released August 1 at the conference.

I Heard Good News Today
Stories for Children

This book, a collection of stories, was commissioned and funded by WM as a result of repeated requests for a mission and service storybook written specifically for children. It was produced in collaboration with the Commission on Education.

Cornelia, through a flowing storytelling format, shows how the word of Jesus has become a reality to the global family through the centuries. The stories will be useful for families, pastors, for Sunday morning storytellers, Sunday school teachers, Summer Bible School, camp settings, and, of course, children themselves. Adults will also enjoy reading the stories.

Published as a companion piece to Lehn's earlier book, *Peace Be With You*, the book is beautifully illustrated with full-page action pictures done in pen and ink. Ralph A. Schlegel is the illustrator.

Women in Mission is helping to underwrite the publishing costs of the book and has budgeted $5,000 in 1983 for this purpose. Children's groups and junior Sunday school classes looking for project suggestions for the fall might want to consider contributing money for this project which will be of special interest to them. Program 4 in the February-March 1984 issue of *Window to Mission* will focus on this new book.

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TWO CENTS A WEEK AND A PRAYER was a little slogan which our foremothers used many years ago when they spotted a special need for assisting conference missionaries with retirement benefits. For many years, "two cents a week" built up the Missionary Pension Fund.

The need for funds has continued since some of our earlier missionaries weren't provided with adequate retirement benefits in years gone by.

One way of expressing our continued appreciation to our retired missionaries is by supporting what is now called Missionary Supplemental Retirement Fund. This year WM is making a concerted effort to acquire additional monies for this fund. We encourage all groups to consider supporting this $10,000 item in the WM budget.

* * * * *

The revised Women in Mission Manual is now available from the WM office for the price of $2. This updated version includes valuable information for every group, with "how-to" helps, material aid information, and much, much more. A "first" free copy will be given to each group. Successive copies will cost $2. Order from the WM office.

U.S. contributions should be sent to Women in Mission, Box 237, Newton, KS 67114. Canadian contributions should be sent to Margaret Bueckert, Box 125, Tugaske, SK. S0H 4B0. (Note change of person and address.)

contributors

Gail Wiebe (Kecho—a Senufo Hostess) is from Whitewater, Kansas, and studied linguistics in the United States and French in France before going to Upper Volta in 1982. With the help of villagers, Gail and her co-worker, Anne Garber, recently finished building their home.

Ruth Unrau (In Touch with Need) is in Botswana with her husband, Walter, who is business manager for Mennonite Ministries in Gaborone. Ruth served as first vice-president of Women in Mission prior to going to Africa. She teaches English in a community private school.

Lois Barrett (A Day at the Seminary Nursery) served as coordinator for the nursery until her graduation last May. She and her husband, Tim Mierau, have three children. Lois is now working as part-time worship-education coordinator for Mennonite Church of the Servant, Wichita, Kansas.

Alice Ruth Ramseyer (Program 2: Training for Mission) has been a missionary in Japan for about eighteen years. Now back in Elkhart, she is a part-time seminary student. She and her husband, Robert, have four children, the youngest in college.

Jeannie Zehr (Slice of Life) edits *Window to Mission* from her home at 4226 Maplecrest Road, Fort Wayne, IN 46815. She also works as director of the Maplewood Nursery School.

Elinor Kreider (A Woman in Mission: Adah Wenger) and her husband, Gerald, make their home near Goshen, Indiana. She has retired from school teaching and currently helps manage the office at their fiberglass shop. She has been active in the Eighth Street Mennonite Church Christian education program and is president of the WM group.

Lois Schrag (More About Praying for Peace) is our WM representative on the Peace and Justice Reference Council. She works in a photography studio, and is also busy as a wife and mother, and actively involved as a Sunday school teacher.

Joan Wiebe (WM Office Jottings) is our General Conference WM coordinator working out of her office at 722 Main, Newton, Kansas. She is actively involved in the Faith Mennonite Church, where her husband, Leonard, is pastor.

credits

PHOTO: Cover, Harold M. Lambert Studios, Philadelphia, Pa.; p. 5, Jan Lugibihl.

Gail Wiebe

Ruth Unrau

Lois Barrett

Alice Ruth Ramseyer

Robert Ramseyer

Nancy Ferris

Perry Ferris

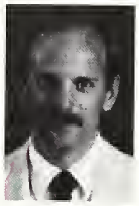
David Bergen

Bob Dambam

Jayne Dambam

Leah Sonwani

Claire de Brun



Harlan de Brun

Elinor Kreider

forecast

The December-January issue will share about women at Bethlehem '83, and will also focus on "Parenting for Peace and Justice."

Printed in U.S.A.

bright ideas

THE 1983/84 Devotional/Resource Packet is now available from the WM Office, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. A new feature you will want to be aware of as you plan programs for the coming year is that we have included an additional program/lesson on missions in India in the packet. It is written by Tillie Jantzen, former missionary to India. Cost of the packet is $2.

Do you wonder what to serve at church dinners and refreshment times? Jocele Meyer, MCC Office of Development Education, recommends that church women who have an interest in more-with-less living and eating should check into the book *Simply Delicious* by Grace Winn (Alternatives, Inc., 1983).

The book is designed to help persons who cook for large groups. Stories are told of the changes several church groups have made in their food service patterns.

Meyer states that the book contains numerous practical helps including adaptations necessary to change family-size recipes to quantity recipes, tables of equivalents, and the number of servings in common pan sizes.

Since 1983 is the "Year of the Bible" why not have your WM group do a special project to help spread the Word? A few ideas suggested by the American Bible Society are:

—give a New Testament during neighborhood home visitations.

—give a Bible as a graduation gift.

—award a Bible for excellency in Bible memory work.

—say "Hello" and "God bless you" with a Bible to newly married couples, on the occasion of the birth of a baby, or to new families in your neighborhood.

—give a Bible or Scripture portion in cheer baskets to shut-ins or in food relief baskets for the needy.

—distribute Scripture during "merchant days" or "sidewalk sale" days.

For information and order forms to obtain Bible Society Scripture portions at very reasonable costs, write to your Bible society:

American Bible Society, P.O. Box 5677, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163.

Canadian Bible Society, 1835 Yonge Street, Toronto, ON M4S 1Y1.

Do you have any "Bright Ideas" to share? Send them to the editor, Jeannie Zehr, 4226 Maplecrest Road, Fort Wayne, IN 46815.

For the first time in 60 years the Mennonites in Mexico are reading their own newspaper. An eight-page, German-language, tabloid newspaper edited by George Reimer and Helen Ens, both of southern Manitoba, is now being published twice monthly in Mexico as a supplement to *Die Mennonitische Post* of Steinbach, Man. The importance of the "Beilage" was demonstrated recently when the paper published the plight of thousands of Guatemalan refugees in the Mexican state of Chiapas. An inter-Mennonite Mexican committee was organized and large shipments of goods and even several workers were sent to the refugee area.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency is offering enticing grants to schools who will pilot their "Disaster Preparedness" curriculum. Under the pretense of instructing students from second grade through high school about every foreseeable disaster, it includes a nuclear attack. The implication is left that nuclear war is a political option, because it is "survivable." (*Metta Views*)

The Council on Economic Priorities found that $1 billion spent on the MX would provide fewer jobs, 53,248, than for mass transit, 77,356; public utilities, 64,859; solar energy, 54,235; railroads, 54,220; and housing, 68,859. Lester Thurow of MIT notes, "While the Japanese are busy working on their fifth-generation computer, we're busy building the MX." (*The Washington Spectator*)

Designated funds sought to replace lost federal student aid

Newton, Kan.—Designated funds are being sought by the church school education and peace and justice offices of the General Conference in an attempt to replace federal student aid that will be denied to college students who are not registering for the draft.

The two offices of the Commission on Education and the Commission on Home Ministries are inviting individuals to send designated monies for a newly established "Student Aid Fund for Non-registrants" by Nov. 1.

A new U.S. law effective July 1 linking registration for a possible military draft with federal educational benefits prompted both the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church to explore ways to help replace the aid that would be lost by non-registrants because of their Christian convictions.

Establishment of the fund was approved by the General Board of the General Conference in March upon the recommendation of COE and CHM. The Mennonite Church has established a similar fund. MC and GC administrators have been working to establish joint guidelines and procedures.

Many times in this century both the General Conference and the Mennonite Church have reaffirmed their refusal to participate in war. During the 1940s young Mennonite men were faced with registration for the draft. Most registered as conscientious objectors and entered Civilian Public Service, an alternative to military service.

Today some men believe registration is a violation of their Christian consciences. Especially under present circumstances, their registering participates in sending a threatening message to nations regarded by the U.S. government as enemies.

The church school education office of COE and the peace and justice office of CHM offer their services and continued support both to church members who are registering with the intention of seeking conscientious objector status if drafted and those who in conscience cannot register. In support of those who take the stand of non-cooperation, the 1971 "Way of Peace" statement reads in part, "We recognize non-cooperation with the military draft when based on loyalty to Jesus as a valid witness. We pledge the resources of our brotherhood to a supportive ministry to young men who take such a stand."

Students eligible to participate in the student aid fund are non-registrants at Mennonite schools and non-registrant Mennonite students at other schools. Full replacement of the funds cannot be guaranteed. Available funds will be distributed to eligible students in November.

The first opportunity to contribute to the Student Aid Fund for Non-registrants will be given to the home congregation of the particular student. The student will be an integral part of the communication process with his congregation.

Mennonite Mutual Aid, Goshen, Ind., is being asked to loan monies to be used as replacement money for loans not available through the federal government programs. An application is being submitted for an MMA Fraternal Fund Grant to cover interest payments while students are in school.

To date, 11 General Conference members or students attending General Conference-affiliated schools have met the eligibility and are in need of replacement funds. The amount of funds to be replaced, including loans and grants, is approximately $40,000. Twenty-five percent of this need is for grants.

Individuals and congregations wanting to contribute to the support of these students are encouraged to do so by Nov. 1. Funds should be made payable to the General Conference Mennonite Church and designated for the "Student Aid Fund for Non-Registrants," Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. *Fred Loganbill and Jim Dunn*

General Conference giving still lethargic

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—Giving to General Conference causes so far this year is only slightly ahead of 1982, when 92.7 percent of budget was received by year's end.

Through the first six months of fiscal 1983, only 34.1 percent of the conference's $5 million budget had come in to its central offices. At the halfway mark last year, 33.5 percent of an identical budget had been received.

Total income for each of the conference's major programs through July (the end of the first half of fiscal '83) were as follows: Commission on Overseas Mission $1,128,994; Commission on Home Ministries, $314,787; Commission on Education, $139,129; and Mennonite Biblical Seminary, $145,129.

"We'll have to have a strong fall and winter or face a duplicate of last year," said treasurer Ted Stuckey. "The picture so far this year is disappointing, but I'm confident that our churches can pick up the slack in the second half."

Stuckey drew some connections between the recent budget figures and the economies of the United States and Canada. "Generally the patterns in our constituency's giving lags slightly behind patterns in the North American economy. When we enter a recession, giving usually stays high for several months. Similarly as we come out of the current recession, it's somewhat predictable that our giving would stay lower for a brief period, then pick up accordingly."

Eighty-five percent of the Salvadoran soldiers trained by the U.S. government (at a cost of $9,000 each) refused to reenlist when their two-year compulsory enlistments expired. (*The Other Side*)

Teusaquillo Mennonite Church members in Bogota, Colombia, reaffirmed their faith and renewed their dedication to the Lord and the church on May 22. This community of believers does not have a regular church roll, but the membership list is renewed every year on Pentecost Sunday. Those who are willing to commit themselves to faithful attendance, cooperation and service according to their capacity signed large sheets posted for that purpose. They may also sign up for instruction in preparation for baptism and church membership.

If a company in which "Mennonite money" is invested acquires an undesirable business, Mennonite Mutual Aid will sell that investment within a year, according to revised guidelines issued by MMA recently. Potential investment prospects are analyzed carefully, noted MMA investment manager Delmar King. Only if such prospects meet Mennonite concerns of peace, health and stewardship, responsible management and quality of life will MMA invest monies for its plan participants. Should a company change its profile due to mergers, acquisitions or management shifts, MMA will sell such unacceptable holdings within a year.

Rehabilitation program reflects cooperation

Moencopi, Ariz.—The Hopi people once had a strong, healthy culture that encouraged them to be humble, industrious and peaceful. For centuries they lived on the mesas, a tightly knit group with a firm sense of identity and little contact with the outside world.

The coming of the white man changed all that. Today, the traditional Hopi way of life has been eroded by contact with white culture. One of the primary causes of the destruction of the Hopi culture has been alcohol. Alcoholism is the single most corrosive force on the reservation, where the alcoholism rate is three to four times the national average.

Moencopi Mennonite Mission is located in the village of Moencopi on the Hopi reservation and is staffed by Mennonite Voluntary Service workers. When MVS volunteers arrived four years ago, they saw the suffering and damage caused by alcoholism and decided to focus the mission's efforts on that particular problem. Their initial efforts were in counseling several alcoholics and working with their families. However, they soon felt they needed help, since none of them had training in this area.

At the same time, Vernon Russell, native director of the tribe's Hopi Alcoholism Program, was becoming more and more frustrated with the lack of funding through federal and tribal channels. His budget was being cut while the problem of alcoholism was growing. The tremendous impact of President Reagan's social spending cuts in 1981 convinced Russell that he needed to look to some other group for help in the task of combating the problem of alcoholism. He looked across the reservation and found the workers at the Mennonite Mission in Moencopi.

With common concerns about the effect of alcohol on the Hopi people, HAP and the mission began two years of informal work together. Russell provided in-service training and guidance for the volunteers as they worked to start an alcoholism program. Together they created an alcoholism education service for the village, built a concrete basketball court in front of the mission as an alternative to drinking for the youth, worked closely with the local Alcoholics Anonymous group, started a part-time recreation program and did extensive community counseling and outreach with alcoholics and their families.

This informal association moved into a new phase in early 1982 when new volunteers arrived. The alcoholism work had developed so much that two new workers were called—one to work on expanding the recreation program into a regular, diverse and daily alternative for young people, and one to work full time with Russell on existing and future program activities.

Since the next major step seemed to be the creation of a work rehabilitation program and since the present program occupied much of Russell's time, HAP and the mission decided to enter into a more formal working relationship. The new alignment of agencies would eliminate tribal red tape and business regulations for work projects and would give recognition and support to the pilot cooperation between a tribal agency and a church. HAP, therefore, took over the alcoholism work at the mission, while the mission supplied volunteers and the physical facilities needed for the work.

The Moenopi Thrift Shop

The title for the joint work of HAP and the mission is the Hopi Alcoholism Work Rehabilitation Program. This is an umbrella program that covers existing services as well as the specific work projects that make up the work rehabilitation program. Russell, various villagers and MVS unit members plan the program and determine what therapeutic and rehabilitative projects can be put into practice and at the same time are compatible with Hopi culture. Self-sufficiency is also desired, so that the program will not need continual outside funding. A corn-grinding service, a home repair service and a crafts cooperative were selected from many ideas, and fund raising was started for the projects.

The corn-grinding service began early this year after a General Conference peace and justice poverty fund grant was obtained to buy a mill, repair the shed that housed the service and provide a stipend for a worker until the service was self-sufficient. The shed was rebuilt and the corn-grinding service advertised in the community. After a slow start, the service has seen extensive use by the Hopi, with enough corn coming in to employ one full-time and one part-time worker in the cracking and grinding of the corn into flour. The corn is weighed and a fee charged per pound. These fees pay the wages of the workers.

The two other work projects could not

Myron Augsburger, pastor of the Washington (D.C.) Community Fellowship, will present the annual Staley Lecture Series at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., Sept. 26-27. Bethel will also hold its Fall Festival Oct. 6-9. The drama department will present the play "A Thousand Clowns" on four occasions during the four-day festival. The annual Menno Simons Lectures will be given by Cynthia Wedel Oct. 30-Nov. 1 at Bethel.

People who smoke low-nicotine cigarettes inhale just as much nicotine as those who use regular brands, according to a study conducted at San Francisco General Hospital Medical Center. "They (smokers) think that if they can't give up smoking, then if they smoke low-yield cigarettes they're doing something good for themselves," commented Neil Benowitz, who conducted the study. He added, "The tobacco companies would like them to believe that, but that is fallacious."

Being a Good Samaritan is now an obligation in Minnesota, where a new provision believed to be the first of its kind in the nation imposes a fine of up to $100 on people who fail to help in an emergency. Although many states have laws that relieve people of liability who help in an emergency, this law goes a step further by making it a duty, the Associated Press reports. The new law took effect Aug. 1.

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get into full swing, primarily because of a lack of space. Again, Russell, some villagers and unit members wrestled with the question of how to get the other two-thirds of the rehabilitation program into operation. After lengthy consideration and prayer it was decided to build a new structure to house the home repair service and the crafts cooperative. Architect LeRoy Troyer of Mishawaka, Ind., was approached about the design of the projected building and responded by traveling to the village, surveying the site and donating complete plans for the new building, which would measure 20 feet by 40 feet and cost about $35,000. Workers at the mission have been applying to various foundations and grants funds for the money to begin building, as well as asking for donations from groups and individuals.

Program organizers are planning for a projected ground-breaking date of April 1984. The home repair and crafts projects will be in limited operation until then, while the corn-grinding service, the recreation program, the alcohol education service, the AA group, the counseling and community work, and the church work will continue unimpeded.
T. J. Sutherland, Moencopi MVS worker

Inter-Mennonite Relations:
MBs and GCs in Canada
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Papers presented will cover MB-GC relations in pre-World War I Russia as well as relationships in music, literature and church work.

For more information write to:
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1984 Mennonite World Conference Tours

Assiniboine Travel Service has arranged for a variety of all-inclusive tours to precede or follow the World Conference Assembly in Strasbourg, France, July 24-30, 1984. Detailed itineraries are available for each tour. The tours all combine educational input from knowledgeable hosts with leisurely touring. (If you wish to join a tour but not attend the Assembly, or if you wish to arrive earlier or stay later for private travel, we would be pleased to make alternative travel arrangements.)

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3. **The Church Through the Centuries: July 6-23, 1984.**
   Host: Waldemar Janzen
4. **Exploring the Middle East: July 9-23, 1984.**
   Hosts: David Schroeder and Gerald Gerbrandt
5. **CMC Choir Tour to Europe: July 13 - August 9, 1984.**
   Host: Helmut Harder;
   Music Director: Bernie Neufeld
6. **Eurail Youth Backpacking Tour:**
   (Details to be announced in fall.)
7. **Exploring Renaissance and Reformation Centers: July 11 - August 9, 1984.**
   Hosts: Henry Krahn and Ken Reddig
8. **Austria, Hungary and the Soviet Union: July 29 - August 17, 1984.**
   Hosts: Al Reimer, John R. Friesen and Roy Vogt
   (Waiting list only)
9. **Central Europe Tour of Germany and Italy: July 30 - August 14, 1984.**
   Host: John Bergen
10. **Romantisches Deutschland Post Conference**
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"Caring for People in Crisis" will be the topic of the annual deacons' family retreat, to be held Oct. 21-23 at Camp Assiniboia near Headingly, Man. Glen Horst of Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg, will be the resource person.

Hundreds of Indians are repairing village ponds and wells, leveling roads and building dams. Mennonite Central Committee wheat—plus, of course their own initiative in strength—enables them to do these community-improvement projects. This year MCC shipped 9,150 metric tons of wheat to India in response to the drought there. Kansas farmers donated 400 tons of the total; Canadian farmers, through MCC Canada Food Bank, donated 8,750 metric tons. The wheat is now being used in a variety of food-for-work projects in 10 states.

An Indian woman helps in building a dam.

MWC approves Canadian conference membership application

Lombard, Ill (MWC)—Responding to a letter of application from the Conference of Mennonites in Canada, the Mennonite World Conference executive committee confirmed at its meeting in Honduras July 13-15 that the CMC is eligible to be a member of MWC and may appoint delegates to the MWC General Council.

The Conference of Mennonites in Canada has 27,655 members in 150 congregations. About 130-135 of these are also members in the General Conference Mennonite Church. That means that 15-20 of the churches in the CMC have not previously had representation on the General Council, and that amounts to "a couple thousand members," said CMC general secretary Larry Kehler.

Jacob F. Pauls, Winnipeg, an at-large member of the MWC executive committee and a member of both the GCMC and CMC, participated in the discussion in Honduras and supported the action. Responding to those who have criticized the "nationalization" of conferences, he said, "We don't want to let the boundary define where the church is, but the boundary is there nonetheless."

"We don't want in any way to worsen relations with the General Conference," added Larry Kehler in an interview after the decision. "This is not a symbol of our declaration of independence. We are committed to a close working relationship."

Relations between Canadian and U.S. Mennonites in the GCMC are currently "as good as they have been in 15 years," said Kehler. He said the polity and character of the CMC, which goes back to the coming of Russian Mennonites to Canada, is recognized and respected within the GCMC. The application for separate membership in MWC was checked with the Council of Commissions of the GCMC, he said.

Twenty-one participating in current China exchange

Akron, Pa. (CEE)—For many teachers this September means a return to chalk boards, textbooks and the same old classrooms. For others, this September brings a unique opportunity to visit, study, teach and learn in China. Opportunities to see the Chongqing Acrobatic Troupe, to visit the Great Wall and the Ming Tombs near Beijing and to travel from Chongqing down the Yangtzee River to Shanghai are part of the learning experience.

During the academic year, beginning in September, 15 North Americans will study and work in Sichuan and Liaoning provinces in China, and two Chinese students, two professors and two medical doctors will visit North America. These 21 people are participating in the 1983-84 China Educational Exchange program.

Eight North American participants will be located in Sichuan province of central China. Herta Funk of Newton, Kan., will teach English literature and composition at the Sichuan Teachers College in Chengdu, the provincial capital of Sichuan. Peter, Margaret and Karen Peters of Winnipeg will teach English at the Chongqing Medical College. Barry Nolan and Agnes Hubert of Edmonton will continue in their second year at the Chongqing Teachers College, teaching English.

Atlee and Winifred Beechy of Goshen, Ind., have received a special invitation to spend four months, beginning in March 1984, in Sichuan province, serving as consultants to the Sichuan Bureau of Higher Education in the fields of education and psychology. The Beechys will be based at the Sichuan Teachers College in Chengdu but will spend some time in other institutions of higher education in the province.

The Chinese professors from Sichuan, scheduled to visit North America for 10 months, will teach Chinese language at Goshen (Ind.) College and Chinese history and culture at Eastern Mennonite College in Harrisonburg, Va.

The second province in which the exchange program focuses is Liaoning. CEE has placed five teachers of English at the Northeast Institute of Technology in the city of Shenyang. Beverly Holmskog, professor at Tabor College in Hillsboro, Kan., is spending six months at NEIT, teaching English to 74 students as part of a 10-week summer English program. Beginning in September she will teach conversational English to teachers and serve as an adviser to the English language department in the university.

Two other English teachers—David Kauffman of Zanesfield, Ohio, and Norman Holmskog of Hillsboro—are also at NEIT. They assist in the teaching of conversational English to post-graduate and selected students.

Camp director/manager

Full-time camp director/manager needed for Conference of Mennonites in Alberta. Duties to commence Jan. 1, 1984.

Please send complete resume, including salary expectations, by Oct. 15 to:
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● For Today's Families

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Cherishable: Love and Marriage *David Augsburger's* new trade paperback edition of his classic work which explores creative relationships for marriage—wise and warm steps to a lasting relationship. It provides resources to enrich any marriage, solve problems, and determine whether a marriage fails, is only bearable, or becomes the relationship of a lifetime.
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When Caring Is Not Enough *David Augsburger's* fourth book in his "Caring Enough . . ." series. Provides clearly defined skills for fair fighting. Through the book readers will grow in their understandings of a just, fair, and trustworthy relationship.
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Dear Children *Hattie Larlham's* remarkable story of trial and triumph. "Sensitivity, love, and toughness infuse this autobiography by a Christian nurse who started what is today the Hattie Larlham Foundation, a center providing 24-hour care for severely disabled children. Larlham shares a bit from her own childhood and young adulthood, but her emphasis is on the children themselves. A moving glimpse into the life of a remarkable woman and her family."—*Library Journal*
Hardcover $9.95, in Canada $11.95

● For Today's Children

Celebrate the Seasons
From the authors of *Loaves and Fishes*, a charming gardening book for children that invites them to participate in God's bountiful wonders. The book abounds with clear, practical, step-by-step information illustrated with colorful children's art. Creative "gifts from the garden" and delicious recipes provide children a chance to share the rewards of their work with family, friends, or their neighborhood food bank.
Paper $6.95, in Canada $8.35

Winter Caboose *Dorothy Hamilton's* latest juvenile novel is a sequel to one of her first books—*The Blue Caboose*. In this story, we see Jody Bryant and his mother reunited with the father who abandoned them. In the midst of a winter storm, Jody realizes that his mother was fair when she said Barney Bryant deserved a chance to prove that he wanted to be a part of the family again.
Paper $3.50, in Canada $4.20

The Shiny Dragon *Esther Vogt*, award winning author of *Turkey Red* and *Harvest Gold* (David C. Cook), has a new mystery/adventure book for 8-to-12-year-olds. Through the mystery of the shrouded mansion and the shiny dragon that guards the tower, children will learn something about God's love and care for little things, as well as big.
Paper $3.50, in Canada $4.20

Amish Adventure An automobile accident with an Amish buggy sends 12-year-old Ian MacDonald into the bewildering world of the "Plain People." He is confused by the clothes that look about 200 years out of date and the absence of 20th-century conveniences like cars, electricity, and plumbing. But as he gets to know the family, the Benders, that he is staying with, he comes to love and respect them. Once again *Barbara Smucker* has written a children's book that will be loved by 10-to-14-year-olds. From the award winning author of *Days of Terror*.
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● New Series for Junior High Readers

In Search of Liberty *Ruth Nulton Moore's* new, epic novel begins a new series for junior high readers. In it we follow the travels of a 1794 liberty head penny through two centuries in time and across a continent as it brings hope and a message of freedom to the many young people that own it. From a poor chimney sweep in Philadelphia to a slave boy whose parents have been sold down river to a fugitive on the underground railroad to a traveler on the Oregon Trail to an Indian escaping to Canada and freedom to a Vietnamese refugee. Twelve-to-fifteen-year-olds will find plenty of excitement in this new book.
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● Great Gifts

For Conscience' Sake
Sol Stucky's novel "recounts the conscientious objection of three generations of a Mennonite family in Kansas. The sights and textures of Kansas farmland are interwoven with the struggles of conscience faced by young men in time of war. From a plow in the sun-warmed soil of Kansas to the jungles of the Pacific to the 60s peace rally in Washington, D.C., you walk with father, son, and grandson in the search for the way of peace."—John Stoner, MCC Peace Section
Paper $9.95, in Canada $11.95

Festive Breads of Christmas *Norma Jost Voth's* newest treasury of old traditions, recipes, and lore of the Christmas season. Here are recipes for Moravian Lovefeast Buns, Alsatian Zopf, Hungarian Walnut Roll, Ukrainian Kolach, and much more.
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LETTERS

God loves black and white

I have been thinking about Bob Jones University being denied financial aid for students because of discrimination against black people. Some of our leaders felt that for the sake of freedom of conscience this privilege should not have been denied them. Is there no limit to freedom of conscience? Some religious groups feel they must kill certain people. Should that be permitted in order to have religious liberty? I don't think so. Of course if we want to limit the religious liberty of others, we must accept that our religious liberty may also be limited by those who do not agree with us. Easy for me to say this—an old woman—because it's not likely to affect me. But I like the attitude of Kendal Warkentine who pleaded guilty and took whatever punishment the government deemed necessary.

I do wonder on what Bob Jones University bases its right to treat black people differently from white. Usually people base it on Noah's curse. But what reason is there to consider Noah's curse as God's curse? Jacob, in blessing his sons, cursed Simeon and Levi. After a lengthy harangue, he ends up saying, "Cursed be their anger for it is fierce and their wrath for it is cruel. I will divide them in Jacob and scatter them in Israel" (Genesis 49:7). But God did no such thing. The tribe of Levi was really raised above the others. Moses came from the tribe of Levi. The tribe of Levi was chosen to take care of the temple, to perform the sacrifices for the people. All the priests came from the tribe of Levi. They also had to be in charge of health regulations. They were primitive doctors. And the rest of the Israelites had to support them. So old Jacob was quite mistaken in his prophecy. What reason is there to believe that Noah, who had just come out of a drunken stupor, was expressing the will of God?

Can we imagine that a just and loving God would punish all the descendants for the sin the father committed? God does say in a few places that he will punish until the third generation, but no further. And more often we read that the son shall not be punished for the sins of his father. That is brought out particularly clearly in Ezekiel 18:17, 20.

There might be a point in another argument, namely that each race, each species, should be kept separate—separate but equal—as the saying goes. But the trouble is that there is no such thing. One group always dominates the other, and I think God is more interested in justice than in separate species. According to Genesis 1 and 2, God started humanity with one couple, one species. Why shouldn't we eventually become one again? *Marie J. Janzen, Box 205, North Newton, KS 67117*

July 21

Endorse Holy Land tours

I add my enthusiasm to Jake Friesen's Holy Land Tour announcement. I am planning my eighth tour for February 1984. Each time the experience is more rewarding and stimulating. My only regret is that all of this comes at the close of my ministry rather than some 48 years ago.

Here is a most unusual, inexpensive opportunity for our pastors to have this unforgettable experience. If they take this tour they'll never be the same again.

It can be for lay folk as well. If church leaders will contact Jake, he can show you how to have this inspiring experience along with your pastor. *William H. Stauffer, Stone Creek, OH 43840*

Aug. 15

Portage Church is in Portage

In "Conference Highlights" (Aug. 2 issue) of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada, *The Mennonite* reports one of the congregations accepted into the conference as the Portage Mennonite Church, Winnipeg.

The Portage Mennonite Church is located in the city of Portage La Prairie, 55 miles west of Winnipeg. *Henry Neufeld, 54 5th S.E., Portage La Prairie, MB R1N 1H8*

Aug. 22

Read via cassettes

One of the highest priorities of a church library should be to make God's Word—the Bible—available on cassette tapes. First Mennonite Church here in Newton has the King James Version and the New International Version in albums, and after my eye surgery in May I started "reading" through the Bible. This has been a rewarding experience for me, for I have learned much that I had missed and probably would have missed by reading it silently. For Bible study this would be cumbersome, but for inspiration, information and an increased knowledge of the Bible, I highly recommend this for anyone.

Very likely many people have never discovered the true value of the cassette ministry. Those who would give lack of time as an alibi for not reading much, might be amazed how much they could "read"—even if only a few verses at a time—while dressing, shaving, bathing, washing, ironing, sewing, etc. Besides the tapes that public libraries have on a wide variety of issues and the Christian tapes that church libraries have or should have, there are a vast number of tapes available from numerous sources at reasonable prices. Then there is the unlimited opportunity of making one's own recordings from anything that gives off a sound: music, speeches, sounds of nature. For instance, I have a few oratories recorded from television, the president's inaugural address, numerous recordings of family gatherings and discussions, some of which will be invaluable to our descendants. It is surprising how many families do not even have a portable tape recorder . . . homes that may have hundreds or more than a thousand dollars' worth of electronic equipment when a fairly good tape recorder can be purchased for less than $50. *C. B. Friesen, 415 E. First, Newton, KS 67114*

Aug. 29

Offer homosexuality statement

Bethlehem '83 held numerous opportunities for growth and fellowship. I was blessed at many points in our week together, but I left with a troubled heart. The failure to adopt a clear statement on homosexuality cast a dark shadow over that week and the days which followed. People are hurting. The world is watching. Is God's Word so unclear that we are still deciding whether we have a problem or not? I think not.

Our church has struggled with this issue. Out of our concern came a statement adopted by the Beatrice Mennonite Church on May 25. I believe it to be biblical, redemptive and compassionate (and that need not be a multiple choice question). It is available to churches with prayer for study, correction and—most of all—implementation. *Gary Badker, pastor, Beatrice Mennonite Church, Beatrice, NE 68310*

Aug. 29

Banners speak of congregations

Bernie Wiebe

One significant feature at the April 28–May 1 Eastern District Conference sessions was the way congregations gave unique versions of the theme "300 Years Into the Future" in the form of banners. These banners were on display at the West Swamp Church during EDC sessions and at Bethlehem '83.

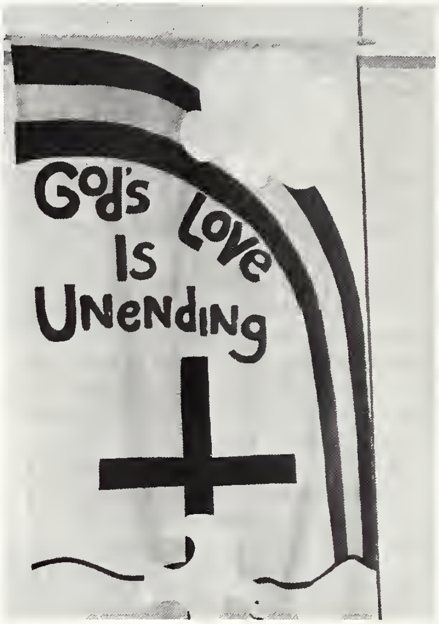
Each banner has a special story with it. We selected several to share with our readers. Regrettably, our black-and-white reproductions fail to show the beautiful color combinations chosen by the artists.

Lower Skippack Church says about its banner: We thought about the theme "300 Years Into the Future" and referred to a concordance. We couldn't find anything under future, so we consulted "generation." We found Daniel 4:3 and felt that this verse was appropriate. In Daniel, God is giving us many signs and wonders in generations from the past and generations to come of his mighty works. We see all around us his magnificent handiwork: the rainbow representing his covenant between God and every living creature, and his creation of the sun, fields, trees and flowers.

Our committee consisted of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Bean, Linda Shainline, Estella Keyser, Ann Yerger, Betty Landis and Nancy Detweiler.

Emmanuel Church, Reinholds, Pa., wrote: "God's Love Is Unending" is the theme we chose to best describe 300 years in the future. When we began the planning for our banner, we thought about what the future of Christianity might be. I am sure we would all like to see a great revival take place in the near future, but we don't know what the future holds for us. We do know that God's plan of salvation will never change, even beyond 300 years. The Bible says in Jeremiah 31:3, "The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, 'Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore, with lovingkindness have I drawn thee.' " That promise from God will last forever. What the future holds is unknown to us, but we do have the promise of unending love from our Lord. John Kitch, Arline Kitch, Kent Unruh, Sandy Regier.

DANIEL 4:3
HOW GREAT ARE HIS SIGNS! AND HOW MIGHTY ARE HIS WONDERS!... AND HIS DOMINION IS FROM GENERATION TO GENERATION.



From everlasting to everlasting you are God
PSALM 90:2
THE FUTURE

First Mennonite, Allentown, Pa., said: The pictures show how the Mennonite Church has grown in the last 300 years and into the future, with God's everlasting light upon us. The design was drawn by Jim Clewell and assisted by Anthony Lucido. Research for the pictures and verse was done by Leroy and Viola Weidner. The hardest part, the sewing, was done by Nancy Clewell and Kathy Stone.

THEY LOOKED FOR A CITY
WHOSE BUILDER
AND MAKER
IS GOD.
Heb. 11:10

Indian Valley, Harleysville, Pa., explained: Our banner depicts the goal of all Christians, whether 300 years ago, in 1983 or years into the future. Like Abraham, we have no permanent dwelling place on earth. Everything we do is to be with our eyes toward the city with foundations whose builder and maker is God. Our goal is Christ and his kingdom and we can successfully pursue it only by the faith displayed in Hebrews 11.

Can Christians avoid politics?

William Keeney

The past summer's visit of the Pope to Poland was a highly dramatic and newsworthy story.

Underneath the story always was the issue of how religion relates to politics. The Pope walked a careful line between a kind of irrelevant pietism or ceremonialism and a direct political action in the conflict between the Solidarity Union and the Polish government.

The Pope clearly identified with the Polish people. He wanted to support their desire to act freely from the constraints of martial law, free from the suppression of Solidarity and from other restrictions against socioeconomic change in Poland. At the same time he did not want to unnecessarily offend the government. To do so would bring more suffering and oppression to the people.

The Pope's visit shows that even so-called "non-political" acts cannot be "apolitical." Just his presence in Poland, or the negotiations before he got permission to come, had political effects. He carefully chose language to refer to solidarity, not referring directly to the union but using the term "solidarity" much as the Marxists have used it as a kind of code word for the unity of workers. The term is not part of the biblical language, but can correctly relate to the Christian understanding of the need for unity with people, especially with those who are oppressed.

Two ideas about politics have special importance in considering whether religion can ever be apolitical. One is the awareness that politics is simply the way people organize and manage their life together. When using the term politics, people generally assume that some unit in the society has a monopoly of coercive force to maintain the structures of that organized society, though that is not a necessity in politics. It does tend to be true of governments, however.

A woman demonstrator pushes a Warsaw policeman June 16 outside St. Anna Church, where thousands of anti-governmental protesters gathered during the first day of Pope John Paul II's visit to Poland.

The second idea is that power of the rulers rests upon the consent of the governed. If consent is taken away, no ruler can any longer govern. Even coercive power requires that it force some voluntary action, no matter how reluctant it may be. If some consent is not given, the power of coercion is lost rapidly.

A people's commitment to religion may affect deeply the readiness to give or take away consent. If people believe that a higher power demands that they disobey the ruler, coercion has limited effect in causing them to obey.

Stalin is reported to have asked once during World War II how many battalions the Pope had. He assumed that the Pope's only relevant power was expressed in the military force he could command.

A number of factors in the Pope's visit point to the power he had that is not expressed in military force: (1) The willingness of General Wojciech Jaruzelski to allow the visit to Poland.(2) The general's readiness to meet twice with the Pope. (3) The agreement to let the Pope meet with Lech Walesa. (4) The suggestion that martial law could probably be lifted soon, partly because of the Pope's visit.

The Pope skillfully tried to use his moral and spiritual force both to move the Polish government and at the same time to strengthen the people in their pursuit of justice and freedom without recourse to violence. The Pope tried to have, and no doubt had, great impact on the readiness of the people to give or take away consent.

Thus, the Pope's visit was a highly political event, though he did his politicking indirectly. He did it as a pastor with fervent compassion for his people.

The Pope was probably more aware of the political nature of his activities and deliberate in his choice of the way he did politics than many religious leaders who assume they can be non-political or apolitical. Some religious leaders who in the Vietnam War visited the troops, hobnobbed with presidents and generals, or made statements that were *only* moral and spiritual did not realize that all those were intensely political acts.

Pope John Paul II and Polish Premier Wojciech Jaruzelski met face-to-face June 17 in Warsaw. The Pope did not hesitate to speak sincerely about important national issues.

Jesus calls us to be "wise as serpents and as innocent as doves" (Matthew 10:16). In acting religiously and affecting the way people respond to organized life together we are not non-political or apolitical. We may be doing politics by different means and in different ways from what is generally thought to be politics, and as such may be more Christian in our politicking. We should knowingly and carefully assess what the political effects of our moral and spiritual actions will be.

When our actions have clear, direct and significant political consequences, we do not necessarily shrink back from them. Instead, we need to do them as wisely and as self-consciously as possible, but also consistent with that higher political order to which Christians as disciples of Jesus Christ are committed—the kingdom of God.

June 25

William Keeney is visiting assistant professor of integrative change at Kent State University, Kent, Ohio 44240.

Not a game

War Games, *directed by John Badham, produced by Harold Schneider*

Reviewed by Brent Sprunger, 1514 E. Eighth St., Newton, KS 67114

LET'S PLAY
THERMONUCLEAR WAR

While engaging in some "innocent" computer theft, a high school computer genius, who is otherwise an underachiever, taps into NORAD's main computer. Previously, this computer, affectionately known as Whopper, simply played nuclear war games with itself in order to discern all options available to the United States in case of a nuclear war. Recently, however, because a test proved that humans were not to be trusted to push the buttons necessary to launch a nuclear strike, Whopper has been tied directly to the missiles so that out of pure logic it would direct the launchings. The next game Whopper played was to be for real.

When he accidently taps into Whopper, the young thief is trying to steal a computer game program. Thinking he has found the right computer he starts playing the game listed as "Thermonuclear War." Whopper interprets this as an attack by enemy forces, so it begins planning to strike back.

While *War Games* addresses many issues (the video game craze, home computer mania, computer theft, first love, teenager/parent relations), the largest issue is the threat of nuclear war which hangs over us. It is interesting that the writers of this film use a game to bring the issue into focus. It points out that we only see nuclear war as a game. After all, who can really conceive nuclear war in our heart of hearts? Luckily for the world, the pure logic of Whopper decides that the only way not to lose is not to play the game.

War Games does not stereotype the military as nothing but hardnosed hawks. We are allowed to see the human side of the general who directs NORAD. This is a plus for a movie which exposes many flaws in the system of "military logic." It is also refreshing to see that a movie can still become popular without sex or graphic violence.

Some of the other issues could have been dealt with at a deeper level. The computer theft which brings the world to the brink of destruction is not resolved. We can be sure that we will see more movies on this subject.

See the movie *War Games.* You won't be disappointed.

Mennonites and the German tricentennial

In our Aug. 30 issue, William Keeney (p. 429) raised the question: "What is the German tricentennial about?" It commemorates the October 1683 landing of the ship *Concord* with 34 Mennonites and Quakers aboard from Krefeld, Germany. These people came to America to pursue their ways of simple living, biblical discipleship and peace. The first permanent Mennonite settlement in America was begun at Germantown, Pa., in 1683.

The Federal Republic of Germany and the United States have both taken initiatives to celebrate the tricentennial of that German immigration to the American colonies. President Reagan appointed a 40-member Tricentennial Commission to celebrate this event.

Ironically and in contrast to the peaceful vision of these settlers 300 years ago, the two countries have agreed to install 108 Pershing II missiles in West Germany this year, the most accurate and deadly missiles ever aimed at the Soviet Union. It militarizes the Mennonite-Quaker coming to America.

At the Bethlehem '83 joint sessions of the Mennonite Church and General Conference bodies, a "Mennonite Tricentennial Resolution" was passed to address this dilemma. It reaffirms a commitment to global reconcilation ministries for peace in Christ. It urges the United States and the Federal Republic of Germany to recognize the quest for peace and justice in the coming of the first Mennonites 300 years ago. It calls for a halt to the deployment of Pershing II missiles in Germany.

Oct. 6. In addition, the resolution encourages Mennonites who can to join in the Oct. 6 "Friendship Without Missiles" celebration being planned for Philadelphia. On that date at 6:30 p.m. there will be a Quaker-Mennonite joint worship service at the Central Philadelphia Friends Meeting House, 1501 Cherry St., Philadelphia.

And at 7:30 p.m. there will be "A Demonstration of Faith and Conscience" at the art museum steps in Philadelphia (Spring Garden exit from Schuylkill Expressway). Speakers from the peace movements in Germany and the United States will be featured. This public rally is to go on at the same time as the U.S. and West German presidents take part in a tricentennial banquet at a Philadelphia hotel.

Further information on the above is available from Philadelphia Mennonite Council, 1632 Diamond St., Philadelphia, PA 19121 (215/763-7166).

Oct. 16. Also, the resolution favors an invitation from the German Mennonite Peace Committee to join them in observing Oct. 16 as "Transatlantic Peace Sunday." The invitation says, "As slavery was then, so the arms race today is a challenge to Christian faith." To focus this observance in our congregations, MCC U.S. Peace Section, Akron, PA 17501 offers the following resources: (1) The New Abolitionist Covenant—10¢; (2) "My People, I Am Your Security," A Nuclear Prophecy—1 page, 5¢; (3) "Nuclear Annihilation and a Faithful People," A Biblical Meditation—2 pages, 10¢. *Compiled from materials submitted by Rachel A. Shenk for the Mennonite historical committees*

MEDITATION

Is one gesture enough?

"Peace!" he raised his hand toward me and said as he came in for supper.

"Peace!" I motioned back to him above our four daughters, the television and the woodstove, that in this moment would all demand his attention.

Peace. Thank God. Hallelujah. For 24 hours Joe and I had an on-the-farm fight going. For me, and I can only speak for myself, it was the longest and worst in our 15 years of marriage. It was spirit-damaging and important enough that it couldn't be ignored, even though he tried. But this unusual, simple greeting of "peace" was enough.

Sucker. I ought to rip him up and throw him down.

Fool. He ought to take care of you in worse ways.

Peace. Was the gesture enough to bring back that wonderful, happy, normal feeling of having a warm home, plenty of farm work, health and a shared faith in the winter of 1983?

Loretta Baumgartner

Thanks for discomfort

Lord, thank you for moments of discomfort,
Moments that wake me up
from my coveted night's sleep,
Moments that wake me up
from my spiritual sleep as well.
Lord, it is in those quiet midnight moments
that you cause me to really wake up,
to feel others' problems as if they were my own.
It is then that you speak to me
through your Word
through a song
through a devotional
through the silence of my sleeping home.
It is then that I feel your presence with me.
You are the true source of rest
for my body,
for my soul.
Lord, thank you for moments of discomfort.

Kathy Mast

The chief cornerstone

"So then you are no longer strangers and sojourners, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the chief cornerstone" (Ephesians 2:19-20).

CONTENTS

The busy fall season is upon us. Church programs have again gained momentum. It is exciting. But the haunting question is whether we are ready for God's Spirit to show new evidences of his creative grace among us. Or are we planning simply a repeat of last year and the year before last?

We present some probing, challenging and inspiring articles. Our hope and prayer is to stimulate you to expect *more* from God's Spirit this fall—and you will get more.

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EDITORIAL

God's grace makes our Nothing into Everything

The Bible records heroic acts of faith. God called Abraham and he began a new people. Moses led this people to the Promised Land. Prophets held mirrors before fallible human beings and called them to follow God.

Rough fisherman became fishers for men and women. Saul the persecutor turned into Paul the apostle.

These men and women worked at their faith. Some more politically (Moses, David, Esther), some more socially (Ruth, Amos, James), some more theologically (Isaiah, Paul, John).

Yet when we honestly look at all human efforts, regardless of their nature, we are left with a profound sense of "inutility" (Jacques Ellul, *The Politics of God and the Politics of Man*, p. 190). This is illustrated by the rich young ruler (Luke 18:18ff), who had kept the commandments from his youth but still sought eternal life. The writer of Ecclesiastes gave himself, in turn, to total pursuit of pleasure and to wealth and wisdom, only to discover that "all is vanity" (1:2, 14). There is *nothing* you and I can do that has eternal merit.

The whole road is already paved by God. He created Eden—a garden sufficient to itself. Jesus completed our salvation at Golgotha—without him none of us could stand before God. The Holy Spirit utters what we cannot comprehend or speak.

All our frenzied motions of devotion and worship and service and witness cannot create one iota of eternity. Life and salvation, resurrection and faith, wisdom and discipleship, peace and justice—all is grace; all is already accomplished in God's cosmic timetable; all is done—i-t i-s f-i-n-i-s-h-e-d. You and I can achieve *nothing*, win *nothing*, provide *nothing* of eternal worth.

Yet we are urged, no, *commanded* to repent for our salvation. Then to trumpet it to the world. And to seek justice wherever we go. To live according to the upside-down values of the Sermon on the Mount.

We are a little lower than angels and are the pinnacle of God's creation. To us he entrusts this worldly garden, the visit of his only begotten son and transmission of the son's freeing intent for all of God's creation.

But to us Jesus says, "So you . . . when you have done all that is commanded you, say, 'We are unworthy servants; we have only done what was our duty' " (Luke 17:10).

The key to the mystery lies in this text. Inutility and nothingness is no excuse for inaction. It is not prior to our devotion and discipleship that we pronounce them as nothing. This insight comes to us when we have exerted all possible human efforts to do our duty. Only then do we discover the inadequacy of all human energies.

This is not a verdict of God or of Jesus upon our faithfulness. It is our recognition when we are ultimately honest—by God's free grace we are saved.

This cuts to the bone of Western Christianity. We are driven by what we think is useful, productive, utilitarian. In our eyes we jettison what is useless—things and people. Probably that is why we don't understand much about grace.

"If we are ready to be unworthy or unprofitable servants (active as commanded), then our works can truly redound to the glory of him who freely loved us first. God loved us because he is love and not to get results" (Ellul, p. 197).

Then our discipleship can flow from an inner freedom of grace. It is not to save ourselves or our society but to express God's grace. This is freedom in its best sense. Released from worry about our own achievements, our lives can become parables or metaphors of God's grace. Our freedom becomes a free striving to follow God in *all* we are and do.

We can now better understand Matthew 25. Those who were still caught in the human self-struggle—"strain the gnat and swallow the camel"—of circumscribing what is sacred and secular and who to keep out and who to let in, i.e. those who act Christian after their own interpretations and rules, they are cast into outer darkness. Such people have never known freedom, and God's grace has never flowed freely through their lives. That is the end of our human utilitarianism. Our selfishness chokes out God's grace.

God's grace makes our *nothing* into *everything*. Those who freely lived God's grace *by nature* fed the hungry, clothed the naked, helped the fallen, witnessed to sinners, lived for justice and peace. They did it not for merit and are surprised when the King blesses them and gives them eternal life. It is by God's grace. *Bernie Wiebe*

THE MENNONITE

OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST

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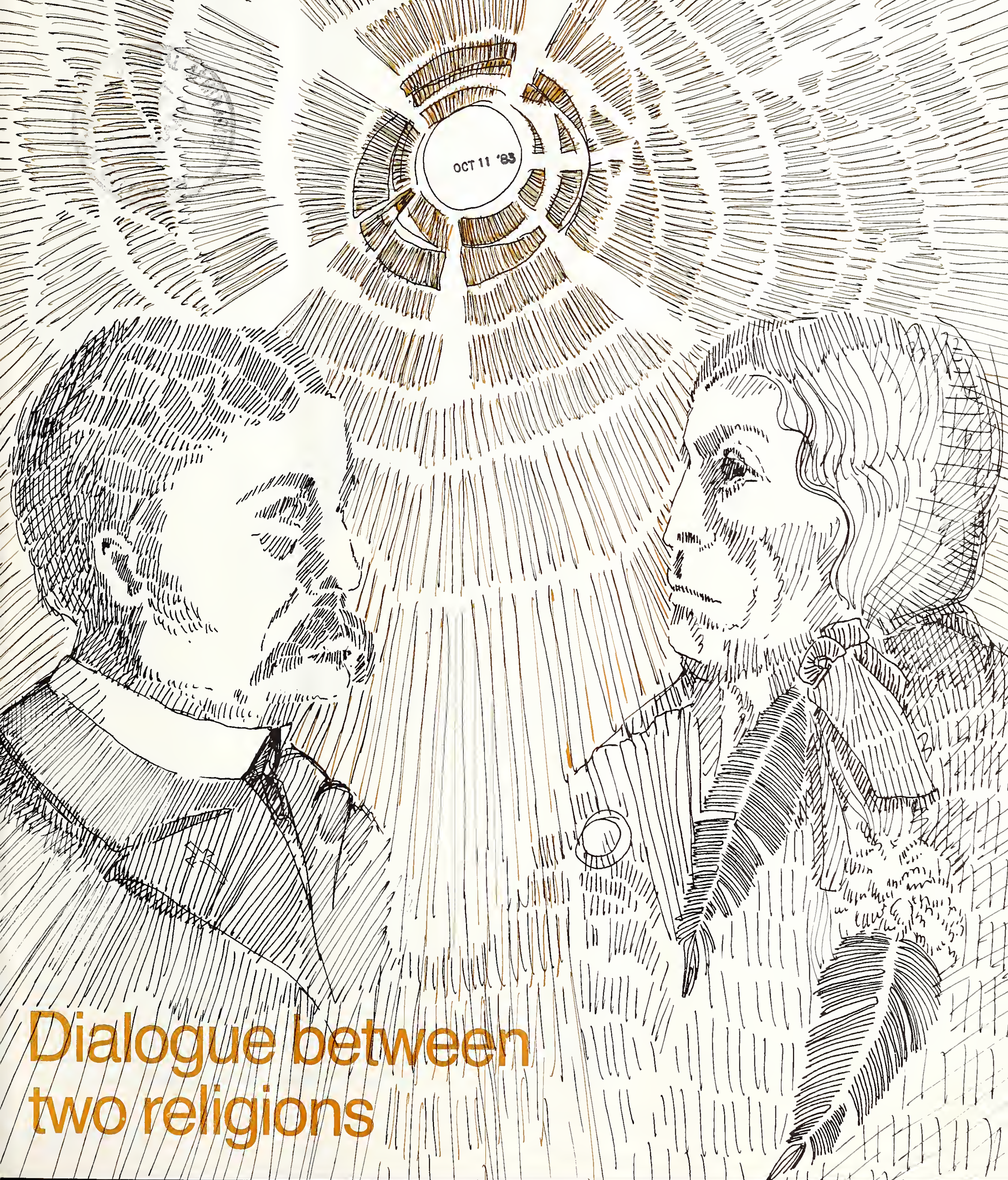

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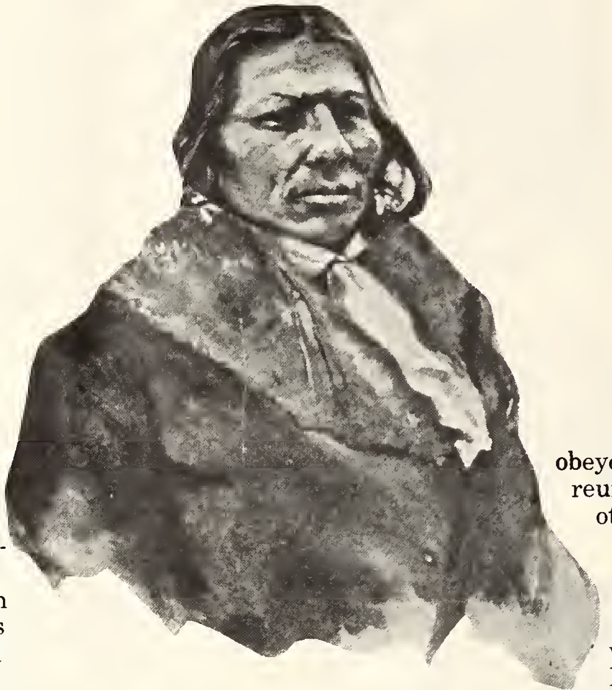
Dialogue between two religions

Sitting Bull and H. R. Voth



Lois Barrett

Both Sitting Bull and H. R. Voth were missionaries when they met in 1891. Sitting Bull—not to be confused with the well-known Sioux chief—was a missionary for the Ghost Dance religion among the Arapaho and other southern tribes just east of the Rockies. Voth was a missionary for Christianity, assigned by the General Conference Mennonite Foreign Mission Board to work among the Cheyenne and Arapaho in Indian Territory (now Oklahoma). Neither converted the other, but their encounter is an example of mutual respect and the search for a commonness between them. They found a way of dialogue across the barriers of language and culture.

Sitting Bull was a full-blooded Arapaho, about 37 years old in 1891. Born among the southern Arapaho, he had moved as a young man to live among the northern Arapaho in Wyoming. The northern Arapaho first heard of the Ghost Dance in 1889 when Nakash, an Arapaho, and several Shoshoni visited the new religion's "messiah" in Nevada and brought back to their own people the Ghost Dance and its songs.

Through the medium of letters written by Indians who had been students at government schools in the East, the reports of the new religion spread rapidly among the prairie tribes. In late 1889 Sitting Bull was part of a large delegation of northern Arapaho, northern Cheyenne and Sioux who went to the Walker Lake Indian Reservation in Nevada to see the messiah themselves.

The messiah which the delegation saw was Wovoka, a Paiute Indian, working as a laborer for a white farmer in the Mason Valley. Wovoka himself made no claim to be a messiah, but simply a messenger from God who, in a trance (probably in early 1889, possibly earlier), had been taken up into another world. There he saw God, also people who had died long ago—all happy and forever young. Wovoka said God then told him to tell his people they must be good and love one another, not fight, live at peace with the whites, and work, not steal. If they obeyed his instructions, they would be reunited with their friends in this other world.

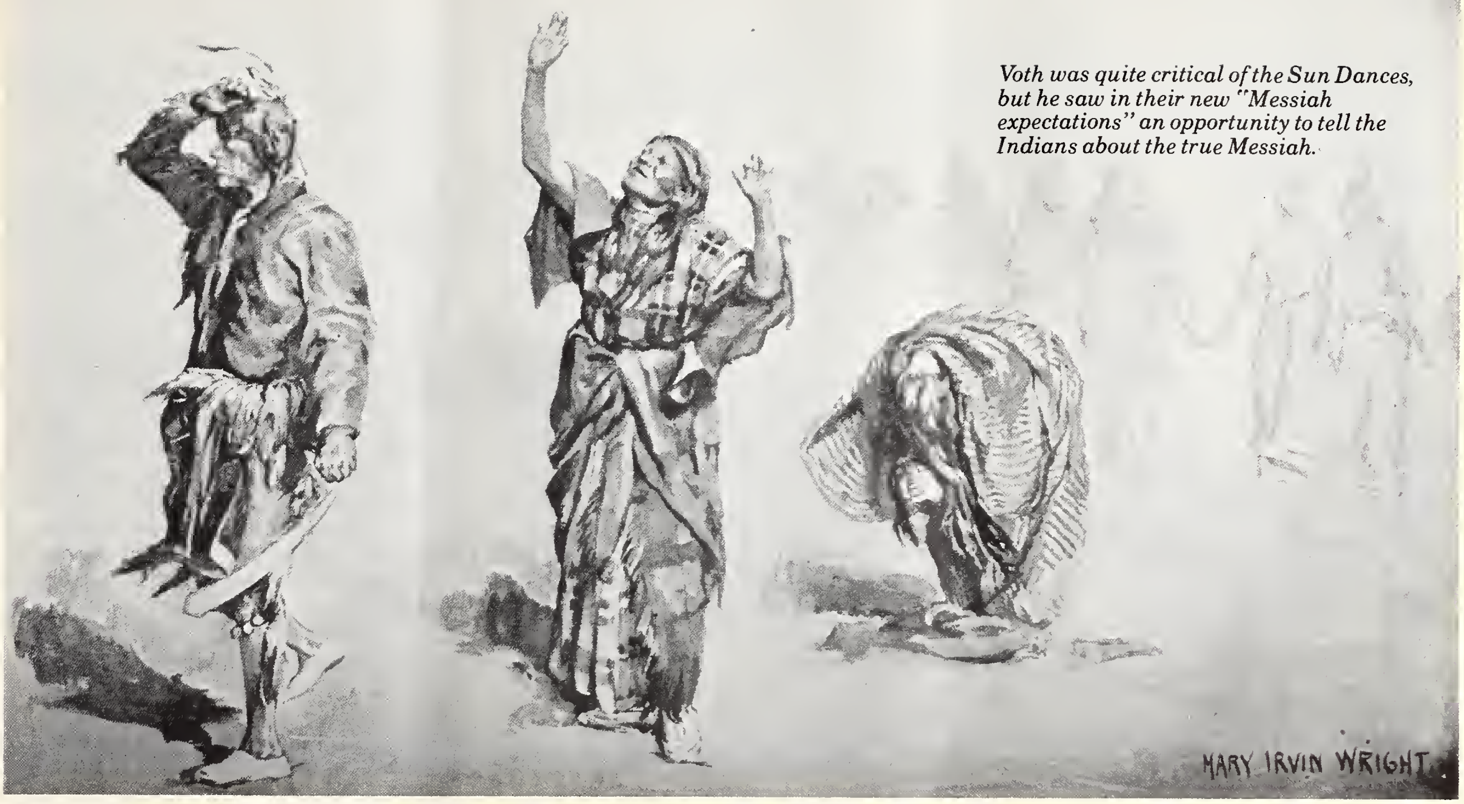
Wovoka expected that within the next year Jesus would come again, the buffalo would return to the plains, a natural catastrophe would swallow up all whites, and Indians—dead and living—would be resurrected to live forever happy on a new earth.

To hasten the coming of this new earth, Indians were to dance the Ghost Dance. In the dance, dancers often fell into hypnotic trances in which they saw and talked with dead friends and relatives and composed new songs to be used in the dances.

Rumors of the Ghost Dance spread rapidly and grew, giving Wovoka power to control weather, know people's thoughts and actions wherever they might be, or magically resurrect the buffalo.

The Ghost Dance became a renewal movement within traditional Indian religion—drawing on its forms but also showing some Mormon influence. In a desperate situation in which Indians were losing the old way of life—the old means of livelihood and some of the old dances—where many Indians were starving, the Ghost Dance religion offered hope that the end of this world was coming soon and Indians would receive a peaceful dominance over a new earth.

Convinced of the truth of the Ghost Dance, Sitting Bull returned from



Voth was quite critical of the Sun Dances, but he saw in their new "Messiah expectations" an opportunity to tell the Indians about the true Messiah.

"... the Ghost Dance religion offered hope that the end of this world was coming soon and Indians would receive a peaceful dominance over a new earth."

Nevada and went south to spread the message among the Caddo, Wichita, Kiowa and southern Arapaho. Through Black Coyote of the southern Arapaho and Sitting Bull, the southern Arapaho and Cheyenne took up the Ghost Dance in the spring and summer of 1890. It was through Sitting Bull that the first trances of the Ghost Dance took place among the southern tribes. Among some in these tribes, Sitting Bull was almost regarded as a messiah himself, but Sitting Bull made no such claims for himself or Wovoka.

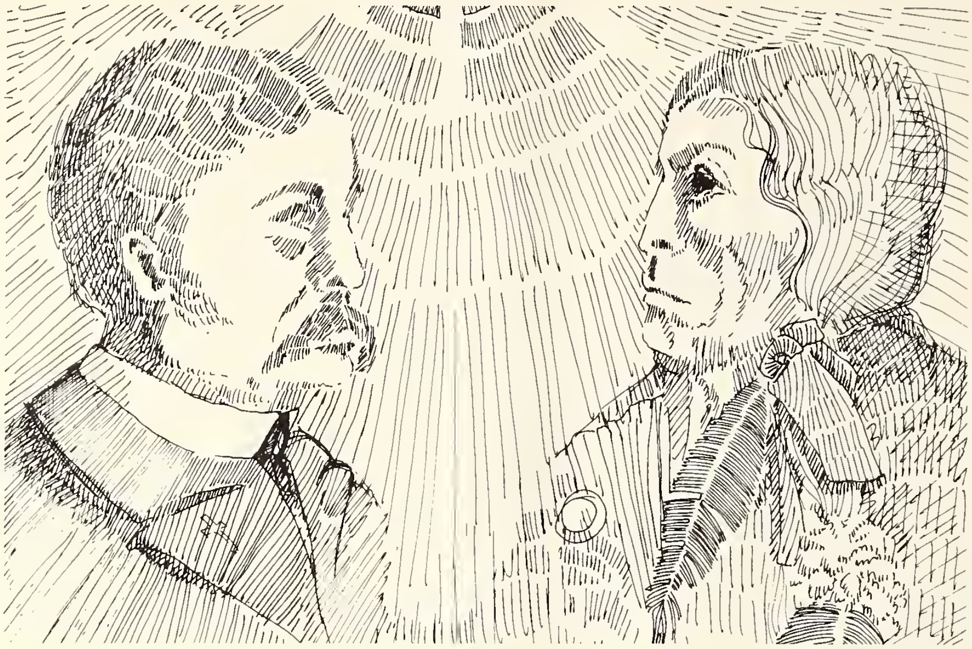
Army captain Hugh L. Scott said of Sitting Bull, "All sorts of people wanted to touch him, men and women would come in, rub their hands on him and cry, which demonstration he received with a patient fortitude that was rather ludicrous at times. While he by no means told us everything he knew, it was easy to believe that he was not the rank impostor that I had before considered him . . . he said that all I had heard must not be attributed to him, as some of it was false; that he does not believe that he saw the veritable 'Jesus' alive in the north, but he did see a man there whom 'Jesus' had helped or inspired. This person told him that if he persevered in the dance it would cause sickness and death to disappear. . ." (quoted in James Mooney, *The Ghost-Dance Religion and the Sioux Outbreak of 1890*, pp. 151, 153).

In September 1890 about 3,000 Arapaho, Cheyenne, Caddo, Wichita, Kiowa and Apache assembled to learn the Ghost Dance, dancing every night until daylight for about two weeks. After the second or third night, Sitting Bull hypnotized a young Arapaho woman, then hundreds of others, with an eagle feather which he twirled. Those who fell into the trances later told the others how they had met and talked with their departed friends and joined in their old-time amusements. From that time on, the Ghost Dance grew rapidly in the south until almost every camp had its own Ghost Dance leader who could bring on the trances.

Heinrich Richert Voth, a Mennonite missionary on the Cheyenne-Arapaho Reservation since 1882, was aware of these new religious developments. Although Voth was quite critical of the Sun Dances of traditional Indian religion, he saw these "Messiah expectations" as an opportunity to tell the Indians about the true Messiah. *The Mennonite* in December 1890 included Voth's report on the Ghost Dance: "The Indians take the thing very earnest and it appears to me there are more and better opportunities for spiritual work amongst them now than ever before. They seek for something better than what the few fragments of their decayed religion are able to give them. They know of the true Savior and they believe in the Son of the true God. But their ideas of him are erroneous and the way to him they know not. . . . I have reason to believe that many an Arapaho will soon be ready to accept Christ."

In that hope, Voth sought out Sitting Bull. Voth was about 36, almost the same age as Sitting Bull. Born in Russia, Voth had immigrated as a young man to central Kansas as part of the Alexanderwohl community near Goessel. He had attended the General Conference's new school in Wadsworth, Ohio, and he and his wife, Barbara Baehr Voth, had come to Indian Territory only two years after Samuel S. and Susanna Hirschler Haury had begun the conference's first foreign mission. Voth became superintendent of the mission when the Haurys left in 1887.

Voth was probably aware of various millennial movements in the United States and of the millennial expectations of Russian Mennonite Claasz Epp, who was then leading a small group of Mennonites into Asiatic Russia and pro-



Voth's willingness to extend an invitation for Sitting Bull to address the Sunday school indicated his openness to "allowing truth to shine forth wherever it might be found. . . ."

claiming the end of the age to come in 1891, after first setting the date for 1889—the dates Wovoka had also chosen.

Sometime in early 1891, Voth got the chance to meet the Arapaho prophet of the end of the age. He reported in the July 1891 issue of *The Mennonite*: "One Saturday afternoon as I was coming from the post office, I saw a great number of Indians gathered at the house of the lieutenant of the Indian police, just across the road. I inquired of my interpreter what this meant. He said that Sitting Bull was there to prepare the Indians for a great dance which they were to have in the evening. I went there to see what was going on. The house in which they were assembled was a square tent house. It was filled with men, women and children. In one place several men were arranging some eagle feathers, in another place a man was painting the face of his wife," etc. Feathers and red paint were a prerequisite preparation for dancing in the Ghost Dance. Dancers adorned themselves the afternoon before the dance began in the evening. Voth continues, "After a while Sitting Bull got up, gave me his hand, and said in a very friendly manner, 'I have heard much of you already, and I am pleased to meet with you.' He then invited me to accompany him to an adjacent tent, where I had a prolonged conversation with him through my interpreter. The following day he and his wife came to our Sunday school, where, upon my request, he gave an address to the children . . . encouraged the children to remain on the road which they were pursuing, to be diligent in study and not to run away from school. . . ."

Voth must have recognized some Christian elements in Sitting Bull's version of the Ghost Dance or he would not have invited Sitting Bull to address the Sunday school at the Mennonite mission. Voth's willingness to extend the invitation testifies to his openness to allowing truth to shine forth wherever it might be found—even though Voth clearly thought that Ghost Dance doctrine was in error at many points.

Sitting Bull was equally open with Voth. Voth reported that Sitting Bull had at one time said "that he well knew that the 'Bibleway' was the only true and the best way. But as he and the other old Indians could not read the Bible, they were worshiping the same God and Father we were worshiping, as well as they knew how. He confessed that their religion was inferior to ours, but he hoped that ultimately it would bring them to the same place where we were."

(At intervals during the Ghost Dance ceremony, dancers would sit to rest and listen to speeches or sermons. Evidently, one of Sitting Bull's sermons promoted the Mennonite mission.)

That initial contact between Sitting Bull and Voth was not followed up. Voth took a leave of absence later in 1891 to visit in Russia. When he returned from his furlough, the Foreign Mission Board asked him to begin the new mission among the Hopi Indians in Arizona, which he did in 1893. Sitting Bull lost some of his following as the Ghost Dance diminished in popularity—when the end of the age did not come on the dates Wovoka and Sitting Bull had predicted.

Sitting Bull and his wife and four others visited Wovoka again in October 1892 but brought back a discouraging report. The messiah was tired of so many visitors and wanted them to go home and tell their tribes to stop dancing. Although the Indians generally refused to accept the message as genuine, the dances continued less enthusiastically. Among the Cheyenne and Arapaho in Oklahoma the Ghost Dance continued to be performed for some time but without the feverish expectations for a quick end to the present world and the coming of the new world. The Ghost Dance doctrine eventually developed into a hope of a reunion with departed friends in a happier world at some time in the unknown future.

Other missionaries in Oklahoma continued to hold an open attitude toward the Ghost Dance. Mennonite missionary and linguist Rodolphe Petter, who came in 1891, accepted the invitation of a Cheyenne chief to speak at a Ghost Dance in 1893. But Petter later regretted that missionaries had not been better prepared to evangelize the Cheyenne and Arapaho at the height of the Ghost Dance enthusiasm. He wrote years later, "Had the Indians at that time had the gospel in their own language, I believe they would have eagerly accepted it and turned their backs to their heathenism, for they were weary of it and groped for something better. Alas, missionaries were not ready with the knowledge of the Indian language, nor had they yet the needed Bible translations." •

Sources:

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The Lord's Supper

John Linscheid

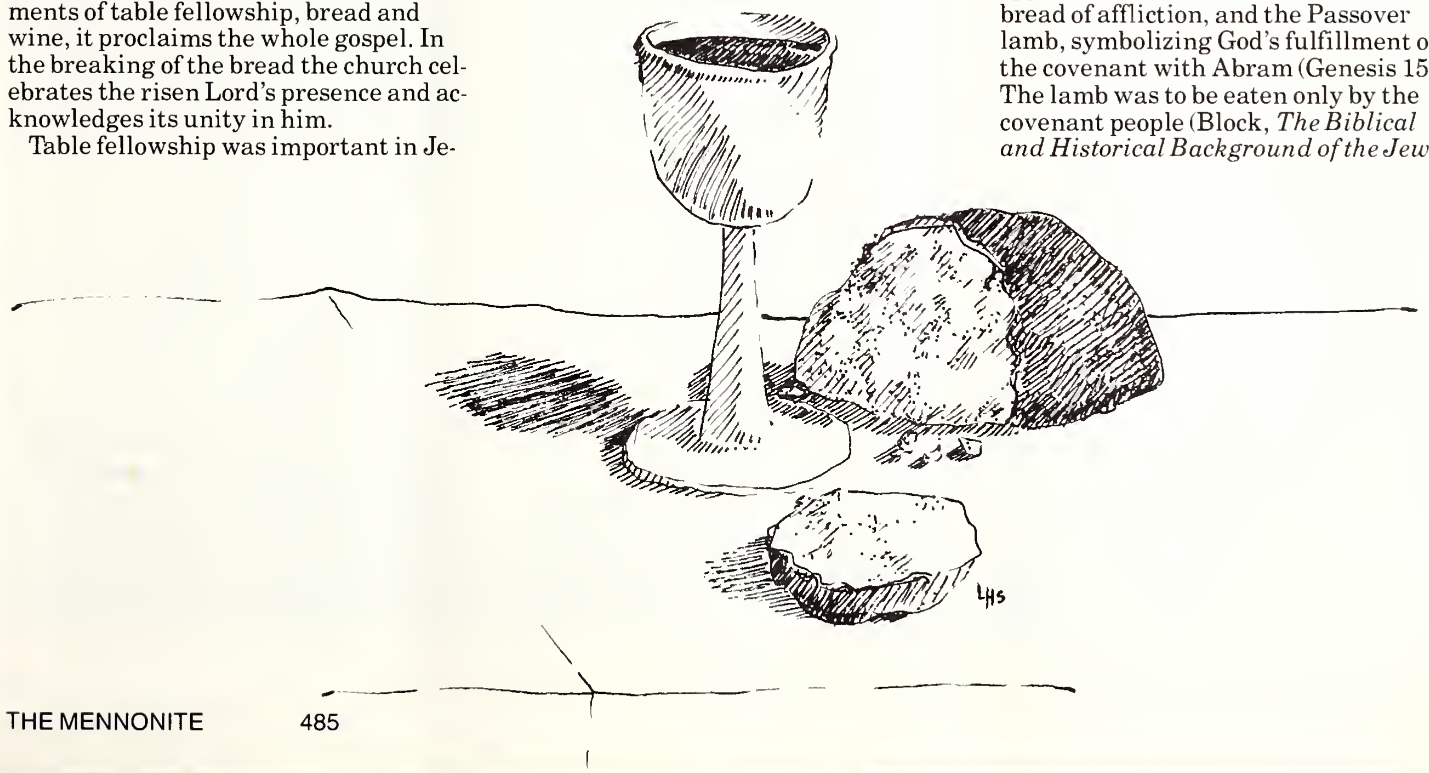
"For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, 'This is my body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.' In the same way also the cup, after supper, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.' For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes" (1 Cor. 11:23-26).

The Supper is the Lord's gift to the church. It has in it many depths of experience and meaning. Using the basic elements of table fellowship, bread and wine, it proclaims the whole gospel. In the breaking of the bread the church celebrates the risen Lord's presence and acknowledges its unity in him.

Table fellowship was important in Jesus' ministry. Eating and drinking together expressed joyous fellowship and covenant relationship (Ross, "Meals" *Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, vol. III, p. 315). As a parable of the kingdom, Jesus ate with outcasts (Luke 5:30) and served miraculous banquets to multitudes (Mark 6, 8). He associated this physical feeding with the giving of his flesh and blood for eternal life (John 6:52-58).

Table fellowship also anticipated the messianic banquet at which the faithful would feast in the kingdom. Isaiah had predicted the Lord would give a feast on the day death is vanquished (Isaiah 25:6-8). Revelation 19:9 tells of the marriage supper of the Lamb. In Jesus' teaching the messianic banquet includes grace and judgment as outcasts are included and complacent invited guests are excluded (Luke 14:15-24).

According to the first three Gospels, Jesus' last supper with his disciples was a Passover *seder*. Passover celebrated Israel's deliverance from bondage and looked forward to the Messiah's coming. The feast began with the *Kiddush*, a prayer thanking God for faithfulness to Israel and for establishing the feast. The meal included bitter herbs, symbolic of oppression. *matzoh*, the unleavened bread of affliction, and the Passover lamb, symbolizing God's fulfillment of the covenant with Abram (Genesis 15). The lamb was to be eaten only by the covenant people (Block, *The Biblical and Historical Background of the Jew-*



In the breaking of the bread the church celebrates the risen Lord's presence and acknowledges its unity in him.

ish Holy Days, p. 103). The meal concluded with a blessing (thanksgiving) over a cup of wine and the chanting of the *Hallel* (Psalms 113-118).

Jesus transformed the seder. By washing the disciples' feet he showed that the way of liberation is the way of servanthood. Expressing his desire to eat the feast with his disciples, he emphasized the importance of fellowship (Luke 22:15). He revealed himself to be humanity's Passover lamb and the Messiah by identifying his body and blood with the bread of affliction and the cup. He proclaimed his establishment of the new covenant in this meal which anticipated the messianic banquet (Matthew 26:28-29).

After his death, the resurrected Lord appeared to his followers at their meals. He ate breakfast with some on the shore of the Sea of Tiberius (John 21) and shared some disciples' supper in Jerusalem (Luke 24:41f.). Two of them had testified "how he was known to them in the breaking of the bread" (Luke 24:35).

The breaking of bread as fellowship with the risen Lord and each other continued to be central in the new church (Acts 2:46). It seems to have been, at first, a daily love feast (*agape*) which may have included the re-enactment of the Last Supper actions. Paul, reacting to abuses of the feast in which some got drunk while others went hungry, wrote that the fellowship with Christ should be reflected in the unity of the church as the body of Christ. Eating and drinking without daily consideration for Christian sisters and brothers ("without discerning the body") would bring judgment (1 Corinthians 11:27-29). He reminded them that the Supper was a remembrance or re-enactment of the Last Supper and a hope for Christ's coming (1 Corinthians 11:23-26).

Ever since the supper at Emmaus, Christians have experienced Christ made known to them in the breaking of the bread. While differing on how it is so, Christians almost universally experienced Christ's real presence in the communion. The medieval church saw the bread and wine becoming the body and blood of Christ. Luther said Christ's presence was "in, with and under" the elements of bread and wine. Menno Simons wrote that Christians who took the elements physically feasted spiritually on the body and blood of Christ.

The Reformation renewed the importance of fellowship or communion in the Lord's Supper. Anabaptists particularly found Christ's presence in the church as the body of Christ. They noted the importance of unity and reconciliation in the body. It resulted in the practice of preparing for the Supper with confession, repentance and acts of reconciliation in the context of the church community. The Anabaptists remembered a parable from the early church which said, ". . . as each kernel of grain gives up its entire substance to become one flour and each berry from the vine gives up its entire substance under the treadmill to become one wine and one cup . . . so also we who once represented many destructive and unfruitful opinions and faiths as we made our appearance from the wild thornbushes . . . give ourselves up under the millstone of divine righteousness to endure the Word of the Lord and say in faith, Here I am, a maidservant and a manservant of the Lord. May it be with me according to thy word. From that hour we are one body, one plant, one growth, one mind and opinion inaugurated into the will of Christ. . ." Bauman, "Our Communion" *The Mennonite*, Feb. 1, 1977, p. 66).

Today many Christians have revived the importance of liberation rooted in the passover supper and Christ as sacrificial liberator of the oppressed. The broken bread and the poured out wine denote the costly nature of this liberation. As in Mark 10:38 Jesus asks those who would share the benefits of the kingdom if they can drink the cup which he drinks. It is the cup of suffering and death. When we drink his cup we pledge to follow him proclaiming release to the captives, sight to the blind, liberty to the oppressed, proclaiming the year of the Lord's favor. We pledge to follow him on the path of love to the cross for his cup is also the cup of salvation.

The communion service should be simple. Its order should be straightforward and easily followed without strangeness or distracting complexity. A few simple elements and actions with depth of meaning are preferable to a glut of superficial symbols. It is essentially action supplemented by words (White, *Introduction to Christian Worship*, p. 234). The Bible records four basic actions with the bread—taking, giving thanks (blessing), breaking and giving (Matthew 26:26; Mark 6:41; Luke 24:30). The cup likewise Christ took, blessed and gave to be divided (Matthew 26:27).

Clarence Bauman writes of our communion: "Communion is mystery because the material is the only medium in which we can know and express the spiritual. Communion is miracle as the sharing of goods becomes an experience of brotherhood. This is the event of theophany for which we hope and wait. Its nature remains a mystery, but the place were it happens is called community" (*op cit*, p. 67). •

I have a fever over lifestyle

Calvin Redekop

It's like a low-level fever. I am referring to a nagging uneasiness regarding my *lifestyle*—that newfangled term for how high on the hog I live. Just when I have rationalized my consumption patterns, I am asked to give a talk to the InterVarsity Christian Fellowship on simple living—and my attack begins again. The fever will not go away, because I am asked to give the talk more often these days.

What does Jesus say about lifestyle? "Blessed are you poor, for yours is the kingdom of God. Blessed are you that hunger now, for you shall be satisfied. . . . But woe to you that are rich, for you have received your consolation. . . . Woe to you that are full now, for you shall hunger. . . . From him who takes away your coat do not withhold even your shirt. Give to everyone who begs from you; and of him who takes away your goods do not ask them again. . . . Give and it will be given to you, good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. . ." (Luke 6:20ff).

Lifestyle is a problematic subject. But I keep thinking about it and I make mental judgments about other people's lifestyles and my estimation of how close they are to the biblical teaching.

The sayings of Jesus are so "far out" on lifestyles that there is no way of coming to any sort of standard we can talk about. As if that is not enough, each of us is fully able to justify our own level of living using the logic of equivalency—my neighbor's expensive wardrobe can be equated with my penchant for buying books.

If that does not obfuscate the discussion, we can use the logic of expediency—I need a Ph.D. for my profession while for you a Cadillac is part of the props for your business.

Besides, if my heart is right with God, then all these other things will fall in place. Capitalism and supply-side economics say as the rich get more, the poor will also be better off.

Does Jesus address lifestyles in Luke 6? He doesn't say one word about size of houses, lawns, prices of cars, clothing, recreation and vacation trips—including trips to Europe to visit the locations of the sufferings of our esteemed heroes of the faith. But isn't that going too far? Spending money on refreshing our commitment to the faith of the fathers is not a question of lifestyle. . . .

How can our lifestyles affect a person like this one sitting near the San Francisco waterfront?

Being "poor in spirit" does not have anything to do with economics, does it? What connection is there between how much I consume and anything else? How can my eating a steak tonight have anything to do with the starving in Africa?

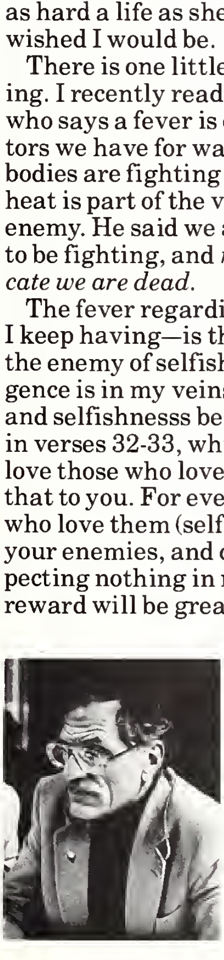
I think I know why I have a hangup about lifestyles: (1) I was reared in the depression of the dirty '30s, so I am uneasy about having more than enough food to eat. (2) My mother taught me to clean my plate and not eat too much so that there could be some food left over for the poor in India. (3) I somehow got the impression that Mennonite simplicity and non-conformity had something to do with piety and religiosity.

So it is easy to see why lifestyle is such a hazy and hopeless topic. I say let's forget the whole thing. There is enough sadness in the world without worrying about lifestyles. What's more, someone has thought up that new term just to make a name for themselves. As a matter of fact, Jesus concludes Luke 6 by contradicting even himself: "Everyone who comes to me and hears my words and does them, I will show you what he is like . . . he is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation upon rock; and when a flood arose, the stream broke against that house and could not shake it, because it had been well built." And he concludes by saying the *foolish man built a cheap house.*

The fever is leaving and I am feeling better. And I remember how my mother used to hope that her children could get college degrees so they would not have as hard a life as she did. I am where she wished I would be.

There is one little worry still remaining. I recently read a book by a doctor who says a fever is one of the best indicators we have for warning us that our bodies are fighting off an enemy, and the heat is part of the vanquishing of the enemy. He said we always have enemies to be fighting, and *no fever might indicate we are dead.*

The fever regarding lifestyles—which I keep having—is the telltale sign that the enemy of selfishness or self-indulgence is in my veins. How can lifestyle and selfishnesss be related? Jesus said in verses 32-33, which I omitted, "If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you. For even sinners love those who love them (selfishness) . . . But love your enemies, and do good, and lend expecting nothing in return . . . and your reward will be great" (Luke 6:35).



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We had a close spiritual encounter

Rosella Wiens Regier

I was sitting at my desk rewriting and revising *Foundation Series* curriculum—at that moment sorting out the differences in the meanings of *mezuzah* (a small metal box/case attached to the doorposts of Jewish homes to stimulate piety) and *phylactery* (a tiny animal-skin pouch with a leather band worn on the forehead or upper arm by devout Jews during daily morning prayers). Suddenly the doorbell rang.

At my door stood two young men dressed in white shirts and ties, with small tags noting their names and identification with the Church of Latter Day Saints. I greeted them warmly and listened intently as one of them asked if they could come in to give a blessing of God for the house and all who live here.

"How nice," I responded. "You'll never believe this, but that is exactly what I'm downstairs at my desk writing about."

Their faces took on a dumbfounded look and I hastened to explain. "I'm a Mennonite church curriculum writer," I said. "I'm at my desk this morning researching about mezuzahs and phylacteries. Do you know what I'm talking about?"

Both of them shook their heads, not quite sure who was really in charge of this interview. I pointed to the door frame and illustrated where the mezuzah would have been placed. Then I told them all about this custom and how important it was to study about it to better understand the culture in which Jesus grew up.

By now I had their full, if somewhat uncomfortable attention.

"Well," one of them finally said, "then you wouldn't mind if we'd give you a blessing from God?"

"No," I said, "I think that would be beautiful."

"May we come in?"

"How about praying together right here on this doorstep?" I said, looking up to indicate the place for the mezuzah. "It's also God's beautiful world out here."

One of them was about to agree when the other said, "We'd prefer to come in, in honor of God . . . and the trucks are noisy out here."

I remembered the bridge construction on 12th Street and quickly invited them in.

"Could we kneel?" one of them said.

"Surely, let's do," and I took the lead.

On our knees, one said, "What is it we should pray for?"

"I'm with you, brother," I said, "whatever you think."

"I think I'll pray for peace."

"Oh," I interrupted gently, "that's great. We are firm believers in peace—peace with God and between nations in the world. That's very important to most Mennonites." Startled, they nodded. And there in the entry of our home, Brother Anderson prayed a beautiful prayer that God would bless our family and others who entered our home, with peace, goodwill, love and concern. I echoed a fervent "Amen" as he finished, for I had truly felt God with us as we prayed.

We rose from our knees and one of them wished me good luck on my writing project. I inquired about the building program of their church in town and was told that a chapel was going to be built so that the present structure could become a Sunday school for their children.

"Oh," I responded, seizing my third opportunity to witness, "if you should ever need good curriculum materials, come back. I can truly recommend *The Foundation Series*."

We all laughed and recognized that there would certainly be fundamental differences between Mormons and Mennonites.

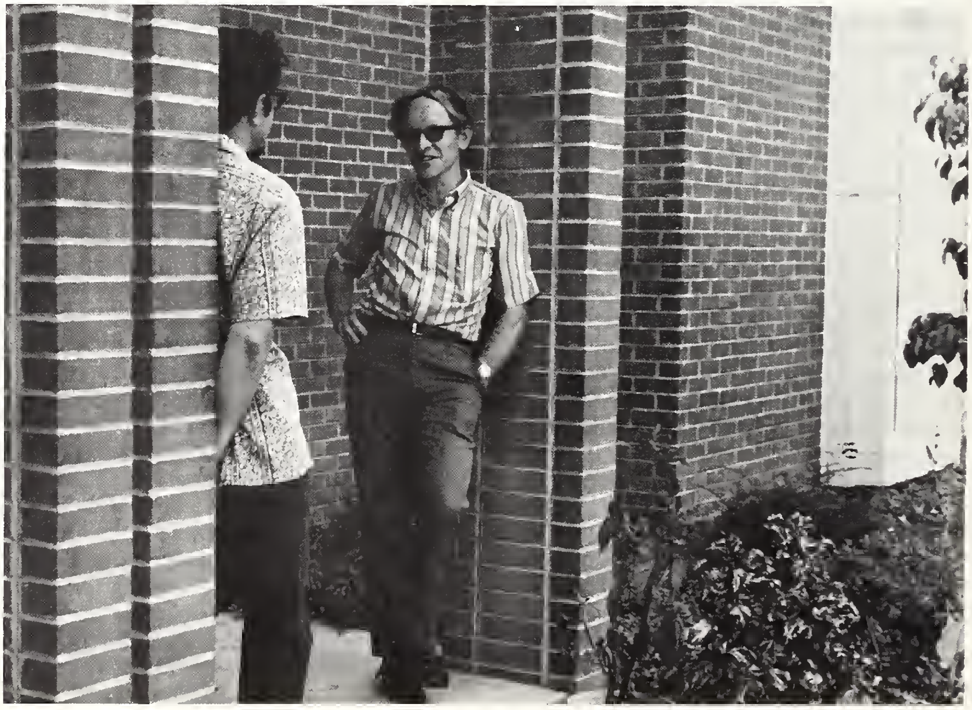
"But," I said, "we certainly share concerns about clean living, the importance of educating children, alcohol consumption, witnessing. . . ."

"However," one of them said, "we have had special revelations from our prophet. . . ."

I recognized that that would be one of the points of our differences since I believed that there had been many prophets beginning in the Old Testament and that we in the Mennonite church believed that even among us there are prophets—helping us deal with cutting edges of our faith.

But that was all. The young men began edging toward the door. Obviously they had had enough to digest about Christianity and Mennonites for one morning. We wished each other a pleasant day and they proceeded down the block. I was grateful for the encounter and felt that we had been mutually strengthened.

Casual encounters can often become opportunities for witness.



Can we serve on the jury?

Howard Zehr

Last fall I received my first notice for jury service. I had never had to face that issue directly before. Courts and sentences are the focus of my work, and I have often contemplated what my own response would be if called.

As I thought about the issue it seemed to me that a distinction must be made between civil and criminal juries. In criminal cases, focus is on establishing blame and imposing pain; the government brings charges against a defendant and the result will involve an assessment of blame-worthiness and punishment. In civil cases, though, the dispute is between two parties, with the judge and jury acting as arbiter. Focus is on a settlement more than on guilt or punishment. Participation in a civil trial, therefore, seemed less troublesome than in a criminal case.

The distinction between capital and non-capital cases also seemed important. As various church statements have noted, it is difficult to see how a follower of Christ could participate in a decision to take a life.

A case could be made for encouraging Christians to serve on juries. Jury service can be seen as a civic duty, as one relatively safe way Christians can take political responsibility.

Christians are called upon to do justice, to see that the oppressed receive fair treatment. Perhaps jury service would be an opportunity to bring Christian compassion and understanding to bear on individual lives. For Christians to wash their hands of it all might be to leave justice to those with less compassion.

But I felt reservations as well. To what extent does God intend us to have power over another's life? Is such power consistent with servanthood?

I am constantly impressed with the injustice and illogic of criminal justice. It is frequently arbitrary; it often discriminates; it callously ignores victims; it focuses on punishment rather than reformation.

Perhaps most important, it is inherently violent and not only because criminal law is enforced by "the sword." Prisons in our countries are by their nature violent settings. To sentence people to prison is to sentence them to one of the most violent environments existing in the society. Could I participate in a decision that is not only enforced by threat of violence but actually results in violence to the person sentenced?

Howard Zehr sits in the empty jury box—pondering the questions.

I also find myself uncomfortable with the way the jury's role has come to be restricted. Juries today cannot normally comment on the wisdom of the law itself. They can only find guilt or innocence on the basis of the facts of the case. Nor are they allowed to decide the remedy, to have a say in the actual sentence. Thus the jury focuses on one basic issue: Is this person guilty as charged? The real issue—How can we resolve the problems involved in this offense?—is obscured. Focus is on guilt rather than problem solving.

With these issues still unresolved when I received my summons, I decided to participate rather than seek to be excused, hoping the process might bring clarity.

In U.S. courts, potential jurors are questioned in an effort to determine their suitability and desirability on a jury. An interesting dialogue developed during this questioning and the information about the case which began to unfold troubled me. A black man was charged with receiving two stolen bicycles. He was to be tried—in a totally white courtroom—under a law that made no distinction as to the value of the stolen property. The charge, and possibly the penalty, would be the same as for a serious car theft.

I had intended to serve on this jury. But I became increasingly bothered. If I were to return a guilty verdict, I would be expected to put my faith in the judge's good judgment in passing sentence. I would have nothing to say about the penalty or the law. I would be expected to make my decision on strictly legal grounds and could not consider causes, the context of the offense, the victim or the offender's need or moral considerations.

I could not in good conscience return a guilty verdict and informed the court that I would not, explaining my reasons. I was subsequently excused.

I am still undecided about jury service in general. I am convinced, however, of the value of dialogue with the court on this issue, both for ourselves and for the court. In most cases we probably can be excused from jury service right from the start. There are other points along the way where one can ask to be exempted if one feels so led, however, that allow for more dialogue.

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Special report

The Philippines: Political polarization, social injus

Frank Epp

Manila, Philippines (MCC)—A revolution may be coming to this nation of 52 million people. It seems to be just a matter of time. Some say it is already under way.

The Aug. 21 assassination of former Senator Benito Aquino, as he stepped from the plane here upon his return after three years of self-imposed exile in the United States, demonstrates the struggles in this troubled land.

Aquino was seen as the probable successor to the aging president Ferdinand Marcos. Marcos has used martial law to stay in power 18 years. When he was elected, the constitution allowed a maximum of eight years in office.

The Marcos regime has not yet been directly implicated in the Aquino death, although many Filipinos suspect him. But it is well known that Marcos did not want Aquino back and had threatened to return him to prison.

Aquino represented the hope that the moderate political middle, systematically destroyed by Marcos since 1972, could be rebuilt to participate in congressional elections scheduled for 1984 and the presidential elections in 1987.

The Aquino assassination, however, strengthened the radical political left, which took to the jungles and hills a decade ago. Many are now convinced that only a forceful overthrow of the Marcos regime can bring liberation and basic socioeconomic reforms to the Philippines.

Change is needed. That change is needed here is no longer in doubt. How it will occur—with or without revolutionary violence—will be determined by those people, here and abroad, who now hold power over the Philippines.

If the American and Filipino people with economic, political and military power would now end the political violence of the status quo and make necessary changes on behalf of the underprivileged, a long bloody civil war could be avoided. If—as seems likely—they do not, the powerless will eventually be capable of staging a violent revolution. Time is not on the side of those resisting basic reforms.

Religious leaders, like the Catholic leaders in Poland, are now the most vocal opposition. They are asking those in power to bring about voluntary change. But if these requests fail to bring change, many of them will likely join the forceful attempt to overthrow the government.

Filipino students are drenched by anti-riot waterguns during protests in 1977.

The regime is dictatorial. It is allied with the wealthy inside and outside the country. A large, corrupt national military undergirds it, as do two huge U.S. naval and air bases in the Philippines.

In 53 of 72 Philippine provinces, units of the New People's Army (NPA) of the National Democratic Front regularly battle the Philippine Armed Forces. Tens of thousands of combatants and civilians have died in the bloody clashes of this last decade. And every day brings news of more deaths.

Why this increasing resort to arms? Largely because an ever-growing number of people have concluded that basic human needs cannot be effectively pursued through normal channels and peaceful means.

The Philippine government bravely instituted democratic processes in 1945, when the Philippines gained independence from America. It modeled its political institutions after those of the United States, with an elected bicameral congress and a president who was limited to two four-year terms.

President Ferdinand Marcos was first elected in 1965 and immediately proceeded to consolidate his power. Before the end of his second term in 1972, Marcos instituted martial law and proceeded to change the constitution, allowing additional terms for himself and favoring the ruling party.

The electoral process became practically meaningless. The president ruled by decree, and he imprisoned or put under house arrest members of the political opposition.

Officially martial law ended in 1981. But little has changed. Thousands of political detainees, not yet charged or convicted, as well as convicted political prisoners are in prison. Justice is hard to come by, mainly because Marcos appoints all of the judges.

Development in reverse. Fifty percent of this nation's population of 52 million die without ever seeing a doctor. Over 70 percent of the children suffer from malnutrition. Thirty percent of the work force is unemployed.

Land reform has gone in reverse in the Philippines. Large landowners, cooperating with multinational corporations, have evicted tenant peasants, often driving them without compensation into the squatter communities of the cities or into the hills to eke out a living. One-fourth of Manila's 11 million people are squatters, living in temporary shacks in unauthorized places.

es may lead to violent revolution

Pineapple, sugar, rice, corn and beef production and processing is increasingly monopolized by agribusinesses. Other lucrative enterprises—coconut oil, mining, fishing and lumbering—are in the hands of multinationals and a small group referred to as "cronies of Marcos." One-fifth of the 500 top corporations in the Philippines are based in America.

Loans from the World Bank and the Asia Development Bank have helped bring the Philippine foreign debt to $16 billion U.S. The result is increased taxes, a deflation of the peso and further courting of multinationals, whose main interests are exports and earnings for their shareholders.

Increasingly the United States is seen as a patron of privilege, wealth and power in the Philippines. Historically the Americans have had the goodwill of Filipino society, originally because they got rid of the Spanish, then because they defeated the Japanese occupiers, and generally because of American educational, economic and political models. The typical Filipino still hopes someday to migrate to the United States.

A great disillusionment. However, a great disillusionment is setting in because of American support of Marcos, the presence of huge military bases and the probable location of nuclear arms on Philippine soil. Another five-year agreement has just been concluded for the operation of 22 American military bases in the Philippines for a contribution of $900 million U.S. to the Marcos regime.

Leading the criticism of the U.S. role is Catholic Cardinal Jaime Sin, who has asked the United States to stop sending military aid to the Philippines because "it only goes to slaughter Filipinos." The Catholic bishops have not given up on those in power. In a pastoral letter they appealed to "our government officials and the military" to make some real changes.

More recently the bishops, in a letter to be read in all parishes Aug. 7, called for the revocation of the immoral Presidential Commitment Order (PCO). When the president revoked the order before Aug. 7, the bishops sent telegrams to all parishes, suspending the reading.

Imagine the bishops' dismay when they discovered that PCO had been replaced by the Preventative Detention Action (PDA), a presidential decree which was worse than the PCO. The PDA publicly legitimized several formerly secret decrees, including the provision of life imprisonment or death sentence for the 'crime' of holding a meeting for purposes of opposing the government.

Organizing the grass roots. Courageous bishops in the Philippines have been careful to maintain political neutrality and to criticize the violence of both the right and the left. Not as cautious about political neutrality are a host of priests, nuns and lay people who are busy organizing the grass roots for the change that must come, through Basic Christian Communities (BCC).

The typical BCC has 30 to 50 families in it. Reminiscent of the Anabaptist communities that were a threat to the Roman Catholic Church in 16th-century Europe, the Catholics in these communities share their lives as they live close together, study the Bible and pray and plan for development. Lay leadership is developed. Peasants and slum dwellers learn to speak their own prayers, read their own Bibles and express their own views.

Airport security men in Manila lift the body of the slain Aquino into a van after killing his assassin, whose body lies on the ground nearby. Aquino's death amplified the sounds of protest against the Marcos regime.

Organizers go from one BCC to another, opening up the Bible, running seminars, teaching improved agricultural practices and discussing with the people how they can defend themselves against landlords, local middlemen, usurers, the multinationals, the government and the military.

It is dangerous work since the government considers such organizations subversive. Recently, for instance, six lay leaders of a BCC were arrested and thrown in jail. They were falsely charged with the ambush killing of a local major. Three priests were also charged. Their real crime was organizing BCCs and working for the rights of local people.

Basically a grass-roots movement, the BCCs are linked together in a national movement with a national secretariat of about 45 people. There are up to 50 BCCs in a single parish, and in some villages all the families turn out for meetings. BCCs constitute a powerful force for spiritual self-understanding and for economic and political self-determination.

Not surprisingly, the religious insights, energy and motivation of the communities begin to translate themselves into political expression. Often the leaders are forced to go into hiding, where they inevitably touch base with the National Democratic Front, a coalition of socialists, communists, Muslim nationalists and Christian radicals, both Catholic and Protestant.

Infiltrating the left. These contacts between BCC leaders and the National Democratic Front inevitably lead to charges of communist infiltration into the church. But one priest says, "It is not the left infiltrating the church. It is the church infiltrating the left. . . . The church has moved from being an agent of domestication and acculturation to being an agent of opposition to, and liberation from, oppression."

The outspoken bishop Francisco Claver, himself a vigorous anticommunist, says, "Why is it that when people try to do something about grave social injustice, forthwith the cry is 'communism,' rebellion, subversion? . . . I see no way except through a lived Christianity. But such a lived Christian-

(continued on following page)

Israel receives 33 percent of all U.S. aid, making it the single largest recipient of American tax dollars. Since 1974, U.S. aid to Israel equals $25.3 billion, or $7 million a day for the last 10 years. (*The Other Side*)

A 30,000-pound shipment of clothing left Philadelphia for distribution to refugees in drought-stricken Ethiopia Sept. 1 by the American Friends Service Committee. Ethiopia is undergoing a severe drought which has forced many people in the northern part of the country to take refuge at feeding centers. Much of Ethiopia is a high plain area where nights often are very cold. The 30,000-pound shipment includes men's and women's clothing of all sizes and varieties, as well as sweaters, coats, children's clothing and blankets.

"It's almost as if a church this young has to make up some traditions," said pastor David Gustafson of the Langley (B.C.) Mennonite Church. One tradition that has begun in the church's three-year history is work days. They have three or four during the summer months. They painted a large country-style home of one church member. The group also sets at least one haying time each summer. Six families have some personal involvement. The church members also go camping together every year at the provincial conference's Camp Squeah.

ity, ironically, will bring on the charge of communism."

The Roman Catholic Church represents 85 percent of the people. While Catholics support the status quo—Marcos, too, is Catholic—most of the religious opposition comes from that sector, supported by some leaders in the two largest Protestant groups, the United Church of Christ and the United Methodist Church. A United Church of Christ bishop says, "One option the people should never surrender is the option of revolution."

Soldiers without shoes. The New People's Army has about 10,000 armed personnel. Their weapons are obtained through the ambush of government troops. Incidents occur every day somewhere in the country.

The NPA is quite popular with the rural and urban poor. It is estimated that already 20 percent of the villages are controlled by the NPA. Its soldiers are known as "soldiers without shoes" or "soldiers of the forest."

One religious source says, "We're not afraid of the NPA. We're afraid of the soldiers of the government" because they are the ones who steal and rape and kill indiscriminately.

Church people who have opted for armed struggle as the only way to change the current situation would be happy to participate in peaceful change, if it were an option.

However, the economic crisis is deepening and the death of Aquino has intensified the political crisis.

It now appears that only radical reforms can stave off a violent revolution in the Philippines.

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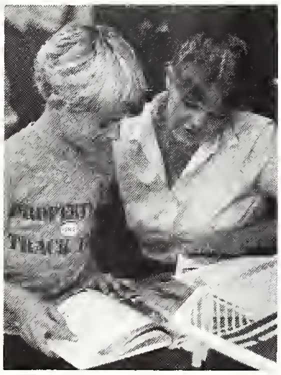
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Fighting in Guatemala between the army and the opposition forces has been brutal. Many peasant homes have been gutted and crops burned in the Quiche in northern Guatemala in the past three years. Few crops have been planted and hunger is a constant companion for those who remain. Earlier this summer Mennonite Central Committee country representative Rich Sider accompanied a delegation of Guatemalan Mennonites that distributed food aid to widows and orphans who survived the fighting. The delegation also investigated ways to establish a more organized aid program through local churches.

The Nicaraguan Catholic bishops' conference issued a harsh document recently accusing the national obligatory military service now facing approval by the council of state, of being a method to indoctrinate Nicaraguan youths. "No one should be obliged to take up arms to defend a given ideology with which he is not in agreement, nor to perform obligatory military service in the benefit of a political party," said the church document.

Prisons should be converted into factories where inmates would manufacture items like ballpoint pens, stockings and computers and pay their own way, suggested U.S. Chief Justice Warren Burger. Since most prisoners are "maladjusted . . . lack self-esteem" and "do not share the work ethic that made this country great; they need skills to exist outside prison walls," Burger said.

Central American Mennonites ask for C.O. status

Akron, Pa. (MCC)—Both Honduras and Nicaragua have or soon will approve draft laws which require all young men eligible for military service to register. The Mennonite church in both countries is working to get a conscientious objector clause added to the new legislation which will permit alternative service in case of a military call-up.

In Honduras local newspapers call the sign-up an obligation and a patriotic duty and warn that if not obeyed, citizens can be punished. All men between the ages of 18 and 30 were required to sign up during the month of June, although a 45-day grace period was established for non-registrants.

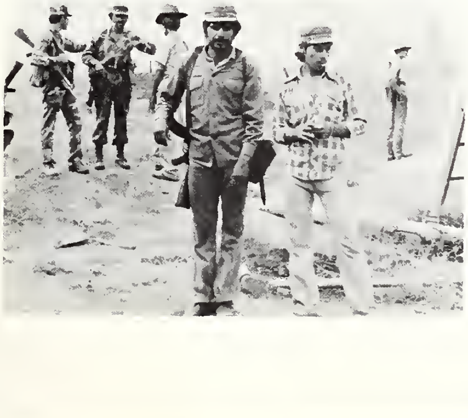
The Honduran Mennonite Church petitioned for conscientious objector status for its young men 18 months ago. So far, the government has not granted permission for alternative service.

In Nicaragua all men and women between the ages of 18 and 40 are eligible for military service under a new draft law currently under consideration and scheduled to take effect Oct. 1. Students and heads of families are exempted. So far, no alternative service clause has been adopted, although Mennonites and other local Protestant churches are in discussions with the government to encourage that provision. Many Protestant groups support the proposed draft law.

Historically in Central America, young men have been taken without warning by the military and forced to serve for several years, often against their will. The draft laws in Honduras and Nicaragua are an attempt to provide a more reliable method of acquiring recruits for the armed forces in view of the stepped up militarization in the region.

Many young Mennonites are not sure what their response should be to the new draft law. One young Mennonite Honduran wrote shortly after registering, "If there were even 10 young Christians who refused to sign up, we would have the power to say 'no' to military service, but as I told you I don't know of the other young people. I shared all this with a group of Christian friends here. They didn't pay attention to me and said that one has to do it, because it is a command of the government. I was at the point of not registering, but I did it . . . against my will. I hope that you pray for all the youth, especially for me, so that I can walk on, always pleasing God. I don't know if it was correct that I did register. But I know that I did it against my wishes."

Mennonite young people in Central America face increasing pressure to enlist in the army. So far, no countries have provided for alternative service.



Camp director/manager

Full-time camp director/manager needed for Conference of Mennonites in Alberta. Duties to commence Jan. 1, 1984.

Please send complete resume, including salary expectations, by Oct. 15 to:
Chairman of the Camp Board
Box 1201
Coaldale, AB T0K 0L0.

Menno Simons School opens in Calgary

Calgary—The first day of school is always exciting, but when it's the very first of first days, it's hard to say who is more excited—the children, the teachers, the principal or school sponsors.

For children and teachers, Sept. 6 was the first day of Menno Simons School, but for principal Martin Goerzen and Rudy Janssen of the Mennonite Educational Society of Calgary, it was the fulfillment of a dream, the culmination of many hours of planning.

There was excitement and a bit of confusion, but before long the teachers had their students tucked away in their respective rooms. There are just under 60 students in Grades 1-8 at MSS, taught by four teachers and the principal, with two grades in each room.

"It's so good to hear the children!" Goerzen remarked. After more than a year of sitting in a temporary office, trying to put the school together, contacting the proper authorities, meeting with parents and other supporters and now working with the children, the vision had become a reality.

Janssen also deserves a lot of credit for the school becoming a reality. Since the David Friesen Foundation offered money for the purpose of building a Mennonite school in Calgary, Janssen has been one of its strongest supporters. Even when the economy plummeted in the past years, he maintained a positive attitude. When the hoped-for provincial government grant was cut, other arrangements had to be made to cover immediate expenses.

Students come from all over the city, by bus or by taxi. The curriculum used is that of the Alberta Education Program of Studies. Although options are somewhat limited, the benefits from religious training and the generally Christian atmosphere is bound to have a favorable impact on the children. *Irene Klassen*

Winners have been announced to the 1983 Mennonite History Contest for junior high and high school students. The winners are Melissa Dietzel (10th grade) of Elkton, Mich., and Alain-Rene Waltner Epp (8th grade) of Lincoln, Neb. Dietzel's essay is entitled "Early Mennonite History"; Waltner Epp's essay is entitled "The Anabaptist Contribution Toward Religious Freedom." Each received $50 in prize money.

Mennonite Disaster Service volunteers have begun chopping up fallen trees and repairing homes damaged in Hurricane Alicia, which struck the Texas coast Aug. 18, killed 16 people and inflicted an estimated $1 billion worth of property loss. MDS volunteers from Kansas, Oklahoma, Arkansas and Iowa, along with locals from the Houston, Texas City and Galveston Island areas, have concentrated their efforts on cutting up the large oak trees that have fallen on houses and blocked driveways, said Ed Wiens, local MDS project director.

Three fasters in Oakland, Calif., ended their fast Sept. 15, 40 days after they promised to fast to death unless there was a significant change in the arms race. The fasters—Charles Gray, 58, Andre Lariviere, 34, and Mitsuyoshi Kohjima, 34—ended their fast by eating rice broth. Six other fasters in Paris and Bonn also ended their fast. A fourth Oakland faster, Dorothy Granada, 52, ended her fast Sept. 13. Doctors feared Granada was about to become blind and enter a coma. The fasters said the public outpouring of support they received constituted a "significant change in the momentum of the arms race."

Non-withholding tax action begins, seven make request

Newton, Kan.—Acting on the basis of a resolution adopted by General Conference delegates at Bethlehem '83, conference treasurer Ted W. Stuckey on Sept. 22 issued the first paychecks on which federal income taxes were not withheld.

Seven employees of the denomination's central offices made the request that the taxes not be withheld, so that they can remit to the IRS personally the amount of federal taxes their consciences will allow, given the U.S. government's high rate of military spending.

Those making the request were Robert Hull, secretary for peace and justice; Lynn Keenan, Mennonite Voluntary Service associate director; Paula Diller Lehman, secretary for youth education; Fred Loganbill, assistant for peace and justice; John Sommer, overseas personnel secretary; Meribeth Sprunger, secretary for mission communications; and Elizabeth Yoder, general editor. Several others have indicated that they may be willing to take part in the action at a later date.

Stuckey said that, beginning with the September paychecks, the seven will have state and social security taxes deducted but be treated like self-employed persons as far as federal income taxes are concerned. Under such a classification, they would be required to submit quarterly estimated tax payments to the IRS.

The seven plan to make a portion of those quarterly payments but put the balance—the amount they feel they cannot voluntarily pay because of high U.S. military spending—into a special account at General Conference central offices.

Stuckey and general secretary Vern Preheim informed Commissioner Roscoe L. Egger, Jr., at IRS headquarters in Washington by letter of the conference's action, the motivation of employees for requesting the procedure, the reasons for the church's granting the requests, the identities of the seven employees and the location of the account to which the IRS may initiate collection procedures. "We're trying to be completely open and above board with them about this matter," he said. Copies of the letter were also sent to IRS offices in Wichita, Kan., and Austin, Texas, as well as to state and federal legislators.

The September pay period is the first opportunity for the conference to implement the "Resolution on Faithful Action Toward Tax Withholding" adopted by delegates to a churchwide convention in Bethlehem, Pa., on Aug. 2. There, conferees voted 1,128 to 457 to "authorize the conference officers to test the constitutionality of the withholding requirements in the United States and to assert the higher claim of Christ's law of love, by refusing to serve as tax collectors in cases where individual employees have asked that their federal income taxes not be withheld from their wages, in order that they may conscientiously refuse to pay for war preparations.

Larry Cornies

Peace evangelism efforts assist in reclassification

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—In an apparently unprecedented action, the U.S. Army has released an army doctor seeking conscientious objector status to the Public Health Service for the completion of his military obligation.

Captain George W. Letson was discharged from the post of military pediatrician at Fort Lewis, Wash., on June 30 after 10 months of waiting through hearings with local commanders, higher command reviews and several appeals.

Letson began his struggle to win C.O. status from the Army shortly before a meeting with Robert Hull, secretary for peace and justice with the General Conference, at the South Seattle Mennonite Church on Oct. 10, 1982. Hull had been encouraged to contact Letson there by Peter Ediger, pastor of the Arvada (Colo.) Mennonite Church, where Letson had earlier become a member.

Hull, a former Strategic Air Command officer who more than a decade ago undertook a similar struggle to win conscientious objector status from the U.S. Air Force, agreed to submit a letter of support for Letson to a commanding officer at Fort Lewis.

A unique aspect of Letson's case is the fact that he will be allowed to finish out his military obligation under the PHS and, under the agreement reached with the Army, will never again be called to active military service if he satisfies that obligation. Under normal conditions, a doctor in PHS may be called to active duty in the military during mobilizations.

While it is impossible to say how much a part Hull's letter of support had in the case, the demonstration that Letson had some affiliation with a historic peace church might have added significantly to the credibility of his argument. "A church connection like that is a real plus in terms of convincing military superiors of the sincerity of your position," Hull said.

"Assisting people who are on active duty with the military and who have developed conscientious objector beliefs in obtaining their discharge on that basis could be a significant witness of peace evangelism for congregations located near military installations," he added. "I will be glad to help any congregation to begin such a ministry."

Millions of hamburger-hungry Americans are unwittingly causing the destruction of the rich tropical rain forests of Latin America and the extinction of many ancient Indian cultures, reports *Food Monitor*. According to a leading tropical ecologist, Peter Raven, since 1960 more than three-quarters of all Central American forests have been destroyed to produce beef, most of which is exported to the United States. Most of the beef is sold to fast-food chains, like McDonald's, which alone accounts for 3 billion burgers annually, the equivalent of 300,000 head of cattle.

Taiwan women's retreat studies 'The Ideal Me'

Hwalien, Taiwan—The annual Taiwan Mennonite Women's Retreat was held Aug. 8-10 in Hwalien. About 100 women registered for the retreat, representing churches in Taipei, Taichung and Hwalien.

The theme of this year's retreat, planned by the executive committee and the Hwalien women, was "The Ideal Me," including the spiritual, psychological and physical aspects of wholeness. Paul Lin, chaplain at Mennonite Christian Hospital, was the main speaker and dealt with the first two aspects. Because the conference was held in Hwalien, several doctors from MCH spoke on topics related to the physical aspect.

After arriving, the women had an opportunity to visit several Christian institutions.

Monday evening, after an opening worship and welcome, they participated in Bible drama. Tuesday and Wednesday mornings began with devotions at 7. Following breakfast, there were three speakers on the morning schedule.

The midmorning tea break was a time to visit and look over items for sale at the handcrafts bazaar. Many items were handmade and donated by the ladies themselves. Some items were bought and sold at a profit. The proceeds were given toward supporting a student in India for one year. This is the first project the women have undertaken to reach beyond their own doorsteps. It was a new step of growth for the island-wide women's organization, which has a history of only five years.

To further broaden their horizons, two pastors' wives who participated in the Asian Pastors' Exchange reported on their visits to churches in the Philippines, Australia, Japan and Hong Kong. These experiences helped them realize they were part of a wider Mennonite fellowship. *Marietta Sawatzky*

COMMISSION ON EDUCATION

building a new creation: partners in hope
PERSPECTIVE '84

"Building a New Creation: Partners in Hope" is the theme of Perspective '84, a conference for young adults to be held in Minneapolis, Feb. 16-19, 1984.

Second Corinthians 5:17-20 is one of Paul's most compelling biblical passages. Themes of reconciliation, human liberation and hope permeate these verses. While conference speakers Virginia Mollenkott and Perry Yoder address these issues, more than a dozen workshops will provide the setting to struggle with practical faith and life concepts. Churchwide mission, service, and education agencies will present current service options.

Planning has been oriented for ages 22-30 + . Anyone over 18 is welcome. Register by Dec. 15, using the brochure available from your pastor.

Meet Holly Keller,

COE administrative assistant. Holly provides secretarial services for the offices of the COE Executive Secretary, the General Editor and Family Life Education. Much of Holly's time is spent working with Mennonite Marriage Encounter. She also types manuscripts and does the COE bookkeeping. Thank you, Holly, for a job well done!

COE Calendar

November
20-22 Religious Education Association Convention (Anaheim)
February
16-19 PERSPECTIVE '84 (Minneapolis)
April
1-6 Project: Teach (Owen Sound, Ont.)
Marriage Encounter Schedule
11/18-20—Spruce Lake, Pa., and Calgary; 1/13-15—Champaign, Ill.; 1/20-22—Concordia, Kan.

A People Resource List

Have you ever thought of volunteering yourself to your local congregation as a resource? We all have gifts and talents, abilities and services which could be used in the congregation. Volunteering to serve as a babysitter could free a person in your congregation to serve as a youth sponsor or other tasks. If you have the talent of calligraphy or the ability to design bulletin boards, you could help club leaders or Sunday school teachers and free them for other preparations. Why not think about creating a People Resource List for your congregation? Such a list would be valuable to church leaders in planning the work of the church.

Commission on Education
General Conference Mennonite Church
722 Main Street, Box 347
Newton, Kansas 67114

316/283-5100

coe

MINISTERS

Rhett Butler and *Jeff Kehler* will serve as pastoral interns at Maplewood Church, Fort Wayne, Ind., during the 1983-84 school year.

John Eby has resigned as associate pastor at First Church, Reedley, Calif., to pursue doctoral studies in San Francisco.

Joseph Hung was ordained Aug. 28 as pastor of the Po-Ai Mennonite Church, Hualien, Taiwan. Hung is a graduate of Holy Light Theological College in Kaoshiung.

Nick Kassebaum has resigned as pastor of Spokane (Wash.) Fellowship to become director of the Spokane Fellowship of Reconciliation.

William Keeney has begun serving as interim pastor at First Church, Wadsworth, Ohio, where *Don Steelberg* resigned in August.

Clarence Rempel began as pastor at Topeka (Ind.) Church in September. He was a student at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Ind., last year.

Weldon Schloneger has resigned as pastor of Neil Avenue Church, Columbus, Ohio, effective Jan. 31, 1984.

Melvin Schmidt has resigned as pastor at Lorraine Avenue Church, Wichita, Kan., to become pastor at First Church, Bluffton, Ohio.

WORKERS

New faculty members at Bluffton (Ohio) College this fall are *John Aasmunstad*, associate professor of music, *Lois May Deleruyelle*, assistant professor of nursing, *Kay Hardesty*, associate professor of sociology, *Leila Morera*, associate professor of Spanish, *Wesley Richard*, associate professor of English, and *Judy Stutzman*, instructor of health, physical education and recreation.

At Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg, *Rudy Baergen* has joined the faculty on a half-time basis for two years, and *Ron Boese* is the new maintenance and grounds supervisor.

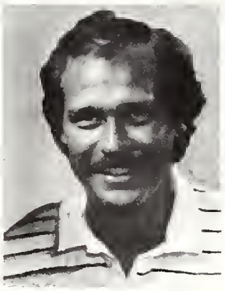
Dona Bauman, West Swamp Church, Quakertown, Pa., has begun a half-time position with Indian Creek Homes, Lansdale, Pa., as congregational worker. She will work to help congregations integrate the mentally retarded and handicapped into their ministry and keep them involved in normal church activities.

Hung

Bauman

W. Bergen

Ens



Bruno Bergen

Wanda Bergen

Fasts

Bruno and *Wanda Bergen*, Peace Church, Richmond, B.C., have been appointed by the Commission on Overseas Mission as Overseas Mission Volunteers in Taiwan. They left for a three-year assignment Sept. 15. The Bergens' first year will involve language study and youth ministry in the Mennonite churches of Taichung. The following two years will be devoted to university teaching and youth ministry in the same area. Both are graduates of the University of British Columbia, Vancouver. Bruno is the son of George and Maria Bergen of Clearbrook, B.C., while Wanda is the daughter of COM missionaries Peter and Mary Derksen of Japan.

Walter Bergen, Abbotsford, B.C., has replaced *John Sprunger* as academic dean and instructor of Old Testament at Swift Current (Sask.) Bible Institute.

Abe C. and *Christine Buhler*, Crystal City (Man.) Church, have been assigned as COM missionaries in Recife, Brazil, where they will be involved in evangelism and church ministry. The first year of their four-year term will take them to Campinas, Brazil, for Portuguese language study. They left Sept. 18. Abe has served as pastor of Calvary Mennonite Church in Monetville, Ont., and of Crystal City Church. He is a graduate of Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg, and Elim Bible Institute, Altona, Man.

Janet Dick, Olivet Church, Clearbrook, B.C., has been assigned as Overseas Mission Volunteer to Japan for a 2½-year term with COM. She left Sept. 7 for Kobe, Japan, where she will teach English conversation and be engaged in youth ministry. Dick has studied Christian education at Columbia Bible Institute, Clearbrook, and nursing at Vancouver General Hospital School of Nursing.

Anita Ens, Fort Garry Fellowship, Winnipeg, is joining her parents in Kampala, Uganda, for a one-year term with Mennonite Central Committee. Her assignment is undetermined. Anita's parents work at Makerere University in Kampala. Adolf Ens is a professor, and Anna Ens is a librarian. Anita graduated from Mennonite Collegiate Institute, Gretna, Man., in June.

Eric and *Kathy Fast*, Altona (Man.) Church, have begun three-year terms with Mennonite Central Committee in Nigeria, where he will be teaching in a secondary school. The Fasts previously spent three years in Zambia with MCC, where he taught and she was a women's clubs librarian. Eric has a bachelor's degree from the University of Winnipeg. His parents are Arthur and Helene Fast, and hers are Jake and Anne Harms, all of Winnipeg.

Donald Goertzen, Mennonite Community Church, Fresno, Calif., has begun a three-year assignment as a researcher and advocate with Mennonite Central Committee in Butuan City, Philippines. A former English as a Second Language instructor, Goertzen worked as a peace education and action organizer with

RECORD

A. Janzen

S. Janzen

Klippenstein

Martens

Sommer

Stucky

Janzens

Mennonite Voluntary Service from 1976-79. He has a master of divinity degree from Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Ind., and a bachelor's degree from Fresno Pacific College. His parents are Peter and June Clara Goertzen of Shafter, Calif.

Kathy Elizabeth Harder, Grace Church, Brandon, Man., is beginning a two-year voluntary service assignment with Mennonite Central Committee in Langley, B.C., where she will be serving in the Out of School Care Program. She has attended Red River Community College, Winipeg, and Assiniboine Community College in Brandon. Her parents are John and Anne Harder of Brandon.

Robert and *Linda Hovde*, Koinonia Fellowship, Chandler, Ariz., have begun a five-year term in Ethiopia as Mennonite Central Committee country representatives. The Hovdes last worked as teachers in Phoenix and Tempe, Ariz. He previously served as a voluntary service administrator for Mennonite Board of Missions, Elkhart, Ind., and she has served on the West Coast MCC board. The Hovdes received their bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of Illinois, Urbana. He received his doctorate from Arizona State University, Tempe. His parents are R. C. and Evelyn Hovde of Normal, Ill., and Phoenix, Ariz., and hers are Lawrence and Dorothy Ostema of Loda, Ill.

Arlene Janzen, Rosthern (Sask.) Church, has begun a three-year Mennonite Central Committee assignment as an administrator and accountant in Botswana. She has a bachelor's degree from the University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, and is a chartered accountant. Her parents are Abe and Margaret Janzen of Rosthern.

Rick and *Janet Janzen*, Rosthern (Sask.) Church, have begun three-year assignments in Maiduguri, Nigeria, at the education resource center with Mennonite Central Committee. He will work as English language officer, and she will organize courses for typists and office clerks. He has a bachelor's degree from the University of Lethbridge (Alta.); she has attended that school and Lethbridge University. His parents are John and Nettie Janzen of Winkler, Man. Her parents are Henry and Mary Martens of Coaldale, Alta.

Susan E. Janzen, Zion Church, Elbing, Kan., has been appointed editor of *With* magazine. She succeeds *Richard A. Kauffman*, who edited the youth magazine for nine years. A 1981 graduate of Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., Janzen is a former staff writer for *Mennonite Weekly Review*.

Robin Jutzi, Rockway Church, Kitchener, Ont., is beginning a 10-month voluntary service assignment with Mennonite Central Committee as a drama team member in Winnipeg. He has a bachelor's degree in English from the University of Waterloo (Ont.). His parents are Merlin and Grace Jutzi of Kitchener.

Ken Klippenstein, Zion Church, Swift Current, Sask., will be teaching for the next three years in Lusaka, Zambia, with Mennonite Central Committee. He has a bachelor's degree in education in library science from the University of Regina (Sask.). His parents are Victor and Doreen Klippenstein of Swift Current.

Bernie and *Sharon Loeppky*, Pembina Fellowship, Winkler, Man., have begun a two-year voluntary service assignment with Mennonite Central Committee in Akron, Pa. He is an assistant secretary in personnel; she works at the Akron Day-Care Center. His parents are Bernie and Helen Loeppky of Winkler; hers are Peter and Agnes Stobbe of Boissvain, Man.

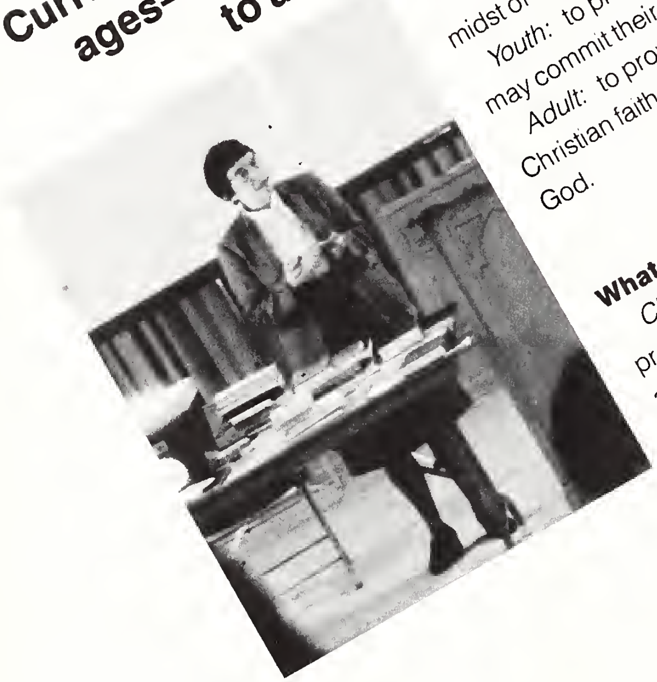
Eleanor M. Loewen, education consultant for the Congregational Resources Board of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada, was named the interim CRB executive secretary, effective Sept. 1.

Philip Martens, Hively Avenue Church, Elkhart, Ind., has begun a three-year assignment with Mennonite Central Committee as a water development and public health coordinator in Upper Volta. He has a bachelor's degree in chemistry from Bluffton (Ohio) College. His parents are Rudolph and Elvina Martens of Hammon, Okla.

John H. Neufeld, pastor of First Church, Winnipeg, has been named president of Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg, beginning in the summer of 1984. Neufeld graduated from CMBC in 1956, and he has an M.Div. from Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Ind. He has been on the pastoral staff at First Church since 1969. In 1982 he completed a doctor of ministries program at Bethany Theological Seminary, Chicago.

Sharon Sommer, Faith Church, Newton, Kan., assumed the position of secretary for *The Mennonite* and the General Conference's news service on Sept. 12. A graduate of Biola College, La Mirada, Calif., and former student at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Ind., she served with her husband, John, as missionary to Japan under COM from 1966-70.

Dolores Stucky, Faith Church, Newton, Kan., began a three-year term in Santa Cruz, Bolivia, as an elementary teacher with Mennonite Central Committee. She previously taught second grade in Deerfield, Kan. She has a bachelor's degree from Bethel College, North Newton, Kan. Her parents are Arlene and the late Menno Stucky of Newton.



For no other foundation can any one lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.
1 Corinthians 3:11

The Foundation Series

Curriculum for all ages—nursery to adult

Overall Objectives

Children: to provide congregations with materials to help adults share their faith with children in the midst of the congregation.

Youth: to provide materials to help youth explore and examine teachings of Scripture so that they may commit their way to Jesus Christ.

Adult: to provide study material which reflects the distinctive aspects of the Christian faith which are emphasized in the Anabaptist vision of the people of God.

What is available?

Children: graded curriculum—nursery through grade 8; presently in its fourth cycle of use; major revision in process; limited adaptation for persons who are mentally handicapped.

Youth: four-year curriculum; Year III presently in use.

Adult: eight study books with leader's guides; initial use completed; will continue to be available as elective studies.

Teacher training courses at all levels.

Intergenerational adaptation of three quarters of the children's material.

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LETTERS

No thanks and thanks

I have read the article "How Do You Contact God?" (July 5 issue) a number of times and have discussed it with my wife, but we are still wondering how to contact God. Or, I should say, I am glad that our God is easier to contact than what the article is trying to say.

And that's my point. What is the article saying? To me it is sheer spiritual gobbledygook. I seriously doubt whether many of the readers understood any of it.

Thank you for that excellent article on Granisle (June 21 issue). Things continue to go down rather than up. There is still no employment in the town; half of it is boarded up and the population has decreased by half. The church too has suffered, having lost a number of key families and a lot of fairly regular attenders. The small group of about 20 is anxious that the ministry, which the Conference of Mennonites in British Columbia and specifically the Burns Lake Mennonite Church started about 10 years ago, continue being a witness in this community. *Dick Hildebrandt, pastor, Church of the Way, Box 510, Granisle, BC V0J 1W0*

Sept. 6

Editor's note: I'm glad you find God easy to contact. Trembley speaks more to those of us who have found that very tough at times. Glad to hear from others.

Affirms Bethel Series

The late D. P. Neufeld, pastor and longtime conference and MCC leader, always carried an enthusiasm for disciplined Bible study.

In 1979 he introduced the Bethel Series to our congregation. We began the program in 1980.

For two years teacher trainees spent 8-12 hours per week for a nine-month period studying the Scriptures. Each of the 66 books of the Bible was covered in the two-year overview.

During the third year the prepared teachers taught a modified study program to members and friends of the congregation. We are really excited about the program and the impact it is having on our congregation.

I have just returned from a two-week orientation in Madison, Wis., to prepare for our second round of teacher-leader training. Over 5,000 congregations representing 40 denominations in the United States and Canada and several other countries are involved in the study program begun over 20 years ago.

To date Olivet is the only Mennonite church enrolled. Several others are considering joining. I would heartily encourage our congregations to seek information on the program by contacting: The Bethel Series, Adult Christian Education Foundation, Box 8398, Madison, WI 53708. *Walter Paetkau, chairman, Olivet Mennonite Church, 2630 Langdon St., Clearbrook, BC V2T 3L2*

Sept. 12

Sensible and sensitive

I am sure the recent outpouring of feminist materials is not under the umbrella of Constance Cumbey's criticized "New Age." I welcome the sensitizing that I am personally experiencing. Dorothy alerts me to such matters on occasion, and I promise myself, "Try harder, Dick."

The September issue of *Builder* has some provocative articles under the larger heading "Freeing Our Concept of God from Sexism." I read them with sincere interest and agree with much of what is stated. Long ago I cringed at "Faith of Our Fathers" and usually sing one phrase "father" and the other "mother." Herta Funk's reference to "Join hands, then brothers . . ." is another embarrassing example of many more she could have cited.

Most troubling to me was the Emsweilers' article. Invoking "Christian scientist" doctrine is counterproductive.

I can't help a reference to our Bethlehem '83 *Assembly Songs*. Great singing it was, and great leadership. Repeatedly I noticed slight alterations of a positive nature, e.g. in "Now Thank We All Our God," line 3 reads, "Who, from our parent's arms. . . ."

But I also noticed changes I found hard to sing, e.g. in "Many Gifts," line 3, "Spirit gives each as *it* chooses." The capstone was "Loving Parent. . . ." Harry Loewen must have had considerable second thoughts before he substituted the above for the time-honored "Lieber Vater, hoch im Himmel." A senior GC official told me he just hadn't been able to sing that. I was similarly nonplussed.

Let the discussion continue; let women be sensible and men be sensitive. And please, let all of us join in "Our Father, who art. . . ." *Dick Rempel, conference minister, Box 2204, Clearbrook, BC V2T 3X8*

Sept. 12

Help to order books

I enjoy the book reviews but they would be more useful if you gave also the cost, address of the publisher, and preferably also the ISBN number. Thus we can most conveniently order the book directly—especially if we do not live near a religious bookstore. *Herman Wiebe, 710 N. 7E, Logan, UT 84321*

Sept. 20

Editor's note: Your concern is valid but we face several problems. The major one is that we serve two countries. Prices and publishers vary. We could probably give the ISBN. Our staff will look at it again. Perhaps we should give at least the U.S. price because we publish there.

books

to educate / to challenge / to live by

Still in the Image

Waldemar Janzen

The author, a Bible teacher at Canadian Mennonite Bible College, has collected some of his addresses and papers into a coherent and eminently readable volume. Subtitled "Essays in Biblical Theology and Anthropology" it offers several groupings of essays on subjects that attempt to respond biblically to the question: What does it mean to live as a human being under God? The first group, Bridging the Distance, addresses the question of divine-human communication. The second group, Blessings and Boundaries, looks at human existence and limitation. The third group, In Quest of Place, considers our orientation in God's world. The fourth group, The Burden of War, responds to the problem of human destructiveness.

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You soon forget anything different

Irene Ewert Wiebe

Approaching the home of David and Mary Hamm, at first nothing appears different from the average house. However, closer scrutiny reveals that for the wheelchair user accessibility begins at the sidewalk.

The gradual incline of the driveway leads to a level entrance at the front door and through the attached garage which is on the same plane. A wide sidewalk around the house gives access to both front and back yards and the patio.

In 1964 the Hamms lived in a split-level house in Saskatoon. David worked as a carpenter and Mary as a dietary aide in the hospital.

A blowout and the resulting car accident changed their whole lifestyle. Mary incurred spinal injuries and, after several months in the hospital, returned to their home a paraplegic dependent on a wheelchair. She tried hard not to be helpless, but inevitably she needed to depend on others more than formerly. Mary was determined to do as much for herself as possible, and she always hoped to walk again. "Sometimes you feel like throwing up your arms and saying, 'I quit,' but you've got to adjust," she says on looking back.

Family and friends have been helpful, but it is degrading to find how many people assume that when you are in a wheelchair you are also mentally incompetent, Mary points out.

But things have improved since IYDP (International Year of Disabled People), the Hamms agree.

Through the process of adjustment, prayer has been a stronghold for David and Mary, although church attendance was all but eliminated until the church installed a lift a short while ago. "People are always willing to help, but it doesn't feel good to bother them," they say.

Mary has been doing her own housework throughout this time, although falling out of the wheelchair was a problem when trying to get at things that were out of reach.

Shortly after the accident, David considered the possibility of installing an elevator in their home, but this was too costly. Soon he was using his creativity to design a house that would give his wife new freedom and safety. "Architects don't know how to build an accessible house, and they aren't interested in all the little things that are needed in such a home," he says.

In 1965 the Hamms' first accessible house became a reality. It served them for eight years. When David wanted to retire to Langham, Sask., the house was sold to another wheelchair user before they were completely ready to sell.

The Hamms constructed their second accessible home in Langham, where they still reside. Level entrances (no steps or door sills), wide doors and passages, large bathroom, low cupboards and firm carpets received utmost consideration.

An inexpensive towel bar attached to the doors at a low level makes it easy to pull the doors shut upon passing through. Some sliding doors are also handy.

The bathroom is equipped with a saskpole and a bathchair allowing maximum independence. Another saskpole at the bedside provides assistance there.

The laundry, located on the same floor near the bathroom and adjacent to the kitchen, keeps all of Mary's work within minimum traveling distance.

Some of the most unique designs are in the kitchen. A built-in oven at a reachable height and a countertop cooking surface with space below it make it possible for Mary to do her cooking from the wheelchair. There is similar clearance under the sink and some counter tops for her to work at.

One set of cupboards is made to fold as it opens out to a position against adjoining cupboards; this allows Mary to move up close. A narrow section of cupboards pulls straight out on casters, exposing its shelves for easy access. An upper cupboard door has shelves attached to its inside; as the door opens, the contents come into a reachable position. Another section has its shelf unit hung on hinges; a light pull swings it out into easy reach. A low counter with the telephone makes it inviting for Mary to phone family and friends.

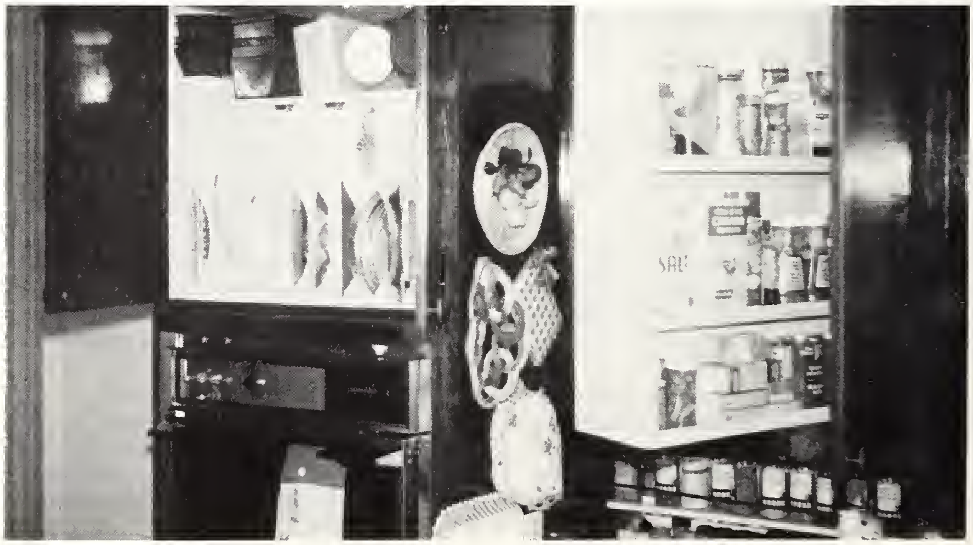
The biggest problems the Hamms encountered were convincing the men to mount the thermostat within Mary's reach and putting switches and outlets in accessible places. "It won't pass inspection," they said.

Mary prides herself on being able to keep her own house with a minimum of help, and David is also proud of her achievements and his designs.

During the process of overcoming so many difficulties, they have both maintained interesting hobbies. David enjoys oil painting, and Mary has collected several hundred pepper and salt shakers of all different sizes, shapes and colors.

Once absorbed in visiting with the Hamms, the homey atmosphere puts into forgetfulness anything different about them or the house that is their home.

A swing-out shelf unit and upright shelf slots make the kitchen wares more accessible.



The Holy Land problem continues

Marlow Ediger

Thirty years ago I had the privilege of serving with the Mennonite Central Committee as a teacher and relief worker in the Middle East. My first task was to whitewash caves in Bethany for Palestinian refugees. Seeing refugee life was a completely new experience. Going into caves and whitewashing them was a completely unique activity. Refugee life is one of the greatest tragedies that human beings can experience. Property, homes and lives have been lost in the process.

In 1948 a series of four wars between Jews and Arabs over the land of Palestine left many Palestinian Arabs homeless. Thus, selected refugees—among other places—came to live in caves in Bethany.

After whitewashing caves in Bethany for one month, I taught in the Mennonite school in Jericho. Toward the north of the school, directly outside of Jericho, was Einsultan refugee camp. Here about 38,000 Palestinian refugees lived in one camp. Directly south of the Mennonite school was Aqabo camp with approximately 40,000 additional refugees. Other Palestinian refugee camps were located on the West Bank as well as the East Bank of the Jordan River, both areas comprising the Hashemite Kingdom of the Jordan. Neighboring states of Syria, Egypt and Lebanon had also taken in Palestinian refugees.

The city of Jericho had its share of homeless people. It is located approximately 700 feet below sea level, which makes for a warmer climate compared to higher sea levels. Thus, at the same time of day in winter, Jericho can have a 45-degree temperature while Jerusalem, located 18 miles west and being 2,500 feet above sea level, can have a 30-degree temperature. Jericho has soil which can be utilized to build clay huts. Thus, one hut after the other existed in both Einsultan and Aqaba refugee camps.

In 1967 during the Six-Day War, Israel captured the West Bank from the Hashemite Kingdom of the Jordan. The West Bank contained ancient Samaria in the north, Old Jerusalem, Jericho, Bethlehem and Hebron. These cities represent a gold mine in tourism. Old Jerusalem is a walled city. The third and present wall was completed in 1542 when the Ottoman Turks governed the land of Palestine. Inside Old Jerusalem is the Dome of the Rock, a beautiful Moslem mosque completed originally in 691. From this general area, devout Moslems believe Mohammed ascended into heaven and came back to earth again. Directly west of the Dome of the Rock is the Jewish Wailing Wall (also called the Western Wall), a remnant of the ancient Jewish temple and holy to devout Jews.

An aerial view of Old Jerusalem, showing the Dome of the Rock (center)

I visited the West Bank in 1971. The Einsultan and Aqaba refugee camps were still there but basically empty of people. The Palestinian refugess after the Six-Day War were now east of the Jordan River and in other neighboring Arab nations, thus becoming refugees a second time.

When I was with MCC as a teacher and relief worker from 1952-1954, there were no Jewish settlements on the West Bank. Today there are 103.

The situation of the Palestinian refugee is worse than ever. Their massacre (Sept. 17-19, 1982) and continual existence in Beirut, Lebanon, does not present any hope for optimism and is a strong reminder of the seriousness of the situation.

Both Jews and Arabs want to be the majority—not minority—group in the Holy Land area. Ancient Israel brings to mind names such as Moses, Joshua, Samuel, King David and King Solomon. Most Jews and Arabs lay historical claims to the Holy Land area. No other region of real estate to either group will suffice. The land formerly called Palestine is holy to both Jews and Arabs. Both claim descent from the patriarch Abraham. Devout Jews claim their descent through Isaac and Arabs acknowledge descent through Ishmael—both sons of Abraham.

Israel is supported heavily by the United States with economic and military aid of approximately $2.7 billion a year. The United States does not provide aid nor officially communicate with any designated individual or group of the Palestine Liberation Organization, nor Palestinian leaders in general.

To resolve the Israeli-Palestinian dilemma, the United States needs to resolve the problem of who is entitled to the Holy Land region. How can opposing sides feel ultimate justice in resolving the dilemma?

Providing for the rather complete security of Israel and permitting a large refugee problem of the Palestinian Arabs cannot make for peace in the Middle East. We must work for peace and security of both sides in the Israeli-Palestinian Arab dispute.

Marlow Ediger is professor of education at Northeast Missouri State University, Kirksville, MO 63501.

Interpreting the Bible

Slavery Sabbath War and Women: Case Issues in Biblical Interpretation, *by Willard Swartley (Herald Press, 1983, 367 pages)*

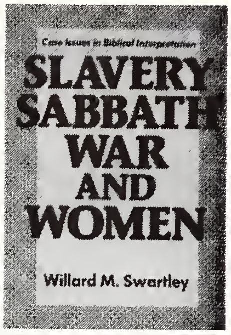
Reviewed by Perry Yoder, professor of Bible and religion at Bethel College, North Newton, KS 67117

Willard Swartley, professor of New Testament and director of the Institute of Mennonite Studies at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Ind., has written a helpful and timely book. In it Swartley reviews the biblical arguments used by opposing sides as the church has wrestled with these four issues. At the end of each case study he presents in summary form what we can learn from these debates about how we should use the Bible in deciding social and theological issues. The final chapter then summarizes what can be learned from all four case studies and points to a positive approach in the study of the Bible.

The great strength of the book is that it allows the reader to see and understand what types of interpretational approaches and techniques have been used to decide these issues. By following these common trends through the four cases one can gain a real appreciation for the strengths and weaknesses of the various ways people have used the Bible to argue for either the status quo or for change.

But beyond these interesting insights, the major positive contribution of the book may well be in fostering a deeper sense of humility in espousing our own interpretations. We see clearly, as readers, that sincere people can be sincerely wrong. We see in the book how much the vested interest of the interpreter and his cultural situation has influenced interpretation. This can lead to an appreciation of how much these biases can also affect what we believe and argue for. This recognition should not lead to despair or to relativism but rather to a healthy openness for dialogue in which we reconsider our own positions and are open to change.

Finally, for me at least, the most significant feature of the book is the illustration of how placing the Bible in its historical context is a powerful antidote to shaping it into our modern image. A historical, literary method of study seems best suited to protect the text from our own prejudices and to insure that its voice is heard. But the book also illustrates that Christians did not and do not agree on what the Bible teaches on social issues. We cannot, the book seems to say, hope for some magic method which will remove these differences. Rather the book points toward a first step, self-examination, then a second, the sober *study* of the text, and finally an openness to actually listen to divergent points of view. Those who value both the Bible and the church will find this work a timely help.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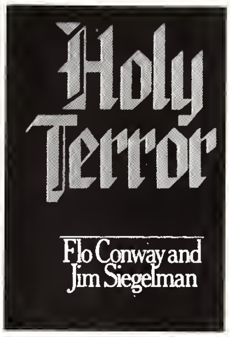

Masquerade

Holy Terror: The Fundamentalist War on America's Freedom in Religion, Politics and Our Private Lives, *by Flo Conway and Jim Siegelman (Doubleday, 1982, 480 pages)*

Reviewed by Eleanor Loewen, CMC education consultant, 600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, MB R3P 0M4

Conway and Siegelman, since the mid-1970s, were looking into the changing nature of religion in America, concentrating mainly on cults. As they conducted this research they found that the vast majority of questions had nothing to do with cults but centered on the tension being created by fundamentalist or other branches of conservative Christianity.

In 1980 the authors found themselves in the midst of a mean mood in the United States. For them the fundamentalist right onslaught in the 1980 elections marked the formal introduction of "holy terror" into the political arena and the authors' pursuit of determining what this holy terror was.

The book is divided into two parts. Part I illustrates the manipulation, intimidation and control by indirection advancing under cover of religion. The primary source of the movement was the "electronic church," with ministers becoming the "big fathers," front men in the modern business of holy terror.

The authors found that the most dangerous people were not necessarily the television personalities, but the people and organizations with money, computers and the obsession with bringing the world to believe as they do.

Part II describes the covert operations the fundamentalist movement uses in undermining the vital human processes of thought and feeling. "Rule by indirection" is achieved through telephone, direct mail and radio as well as through television. The tactics used are more like propaganda than communication (exchange of information). In the fundamentalist right we have politics masquerading as religion.

In their reflection, Conway and Siegelman call for disentangling religion and politics and for a discussion in broader forums of the ethics of communication.

The reader is left with several disturbing questions. "What do they hold against the human mind, human feeling, our capacity to choose and our ability to live as free people? . . . Or in their escape from humanity through technology, would they turn us all into machines programmed by Scriptures?"

Keeping priorities

The Better Half of Life, *by Jean Shaw (Zondervan, 1983, 183 pages)*

Reviewed by Martha F. Graber, program director for Inter-Mennonite Council on Aging, 2422 Minnesota, North Newton, KS 67117

"Meditations from Ecclesiastes," the subtitle of this easy-to-read paperback, aptly describes the intent of the author to provide food for thought to enhance the lives of those for whom life is beginning at 40. However, it does not indicate the lively style of writing, the judicious selection of appropriate experiences from the Bible and from everyday life, or the joyous, challenging and provocative statements that enliven her thoughts focused on 84 selections of one or two verses from Ecclesiastes. An example: "Age is not a barrier to Christian service. Rigidity is."

Although aimed at those in mature years and with print that can be read by eyes that focus better at a distance, the contents are generally neither ageist or sexist. The thoughts will help readers keep their priorities in order.

MEDITATION

Thanksgiving table grace

Table grace is traditional with Christians. Grace is an expression of gratitude that God has again provided us with our daily bread, even if the food is at McDonald's.

Here is a short Irish table grace:

Lord, bless the food upon these dishes
As you blessed the loaves and fishes
As the sugar is in the tea
So, Lord Jesus, be in me. Amen.

This table grace asks for multiplication of our efforts in God's kingdom with his sustaining spiritual bread. Whereas sugar in tea cannot be seen, through taste it becomes immediately evident.

Let it also be our motto: As people are exposed to what we say or do, they can immediately discern the peaceful power of God within us.

Sig Toews

Thou preparest a table

The table you have spread before me, Lord,
Is banqueted beyond my utmost dreams
With entrees, ices, salads and hors d'oeuvres
That tempt the spirit's palate. How can I
Remain depressed, refusing to partake,
When all the world's a-quiver with your love?
Great gales and brustling breezes scour the sky
And brush the vegetation till it glows.
Warm sunshine coaxes, swells the joys of Earth,
And many gifts are offered, urged upon
Me, to partake of all the vibrant loves
Of living, varied in their styles and tastes,
As soft within my deepest heart you call,
"All this is mine for you. Come. Take and eat."

Fern Pankratz Ruth

I am a charity case

We often pride ourselves on making it on our own. Coming up the hard way. Being independent. Self-sufficient.

In fact, we sometimes even belittle people who are habitual recipients of charity. They rely on the benevolence of others. They always need help. We often call them poor managers.

It's tough to admit that we're all charity cases. It's humbling.

But I've got to make my own confession: I'm a charity case. I am. I'm totally dependent upon a loving, benevolent God. All I am and all I have comes from another. They come from God, often through people he uses. I am in constant need of his help, his resources, his guidance, his people.

Sure, I have resources which I call my own—to support my family, to give to the church. But I haven't accumulated these resources by myself. I'm a recipient of God's charity. And that makes me a charity case.

Yes, I've had opportunities. I have enjoyed good health. I have worked hard like many other people. But I'm still a charity case.

Maybe you would like to join me in the refrain: We're all charity cases.

John H. Rudy

CONTENTS

In dealing with the Great Commission, our progress could best be described as "a giant leap sideways." We have avoided getting involved by suggesting that missions are either "overseas"—in a foreign country—or "home"—among minority groups not like us. That way we can be armchair quarterbacks in assessing the efforts of those who dare to take the challenges personally.

This issue gives us a look at the first home missionaries and their mission. It may frighten us. If it does, it will be because we have come closer to facing the Great Commission ourselves.

Think about that also as you read the rest of the articles.

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EDITORIAL

Prepare for Holy Communion

The late Paul Tillich suggested that the Protestant era would let the sacraments die (*The Protestant Era*, p. 48). I sometimes fear he was right. When the Lord's Supper is announced, for many believers it's no big deal. They casually choose to attend or to miss it. If they come, no special thought is given to the participation; it's taken for granted we drink of the cup and eat of the bread.

In Mennonite history it was once common to have a *Vorbereitungs* (Preparation) Sunday and sermon. It urged believers to examine themselves and set things right with God and with their neighbors before taking communion.

It is time to think about and plan more carefully one of the observances requested of us by Jesus. To do this I see some big challenges.

Often when I have shared in communion services at conferences, retreats and in a large number of churches from about 10 denominations, it feels like the most seriously sober ceremony in the church. Everybody looks half afraid, and the words are so somber that they make you fully afraid. But it is not said why or if we should be afraid. In fact, the words are usually a simple repetition of the few biblical texts directly about the Lord's Supper (Mark 14; Matthew 26; Luke 22; 1 Corinthians 11).

Those biblical words speak of a beautifully warm and authentic special fellowship with Jesus Christ.

My impression is that the contradiction of these warm words with the cold observance makes many believers accept communion as a recurring ritual without much meaning.

Mennonites do not like the word "sacrament." It has connotations from church history—that the bread becomes flesh and the wine becomes blood—which scare us.

But holy communion is at least a biblical sign. It has a meaning beyond itself. There is a symbolic significance in the Lord's Supper which we cannot explain. We must receive it by faith.

William Barclay writes, "Without instruction to precede it, the Lord's Supper degenerates into either formalism or superstition" (*The Lord's Supper*, p. 11). I believe we have feared the latter so much that we have fallen into a formalistic ritualism. Symbolism seems harder to deal with for us than to accept wooden truths. We believe we have a theologically appropriate understanding of the Lord's Supper and go through the motions. No mystery and little meaning.

To capture the biblical intent of the Lord's Supper, two steps could help.

1. Communion reflects our gratitude. A dominant theme in the Lord's Supper is to be our thanksgiving. We are reminded to be grateful for Jesus' giving of himself on our behalf.

We precede each meal with a table grace that is basically an expression of thanks. In Canada, Oct. 10 is Thanksgiving Day this year. Can you imagine your Thanksgiving meal being the Lord's Supper? There is no stipulation in the Bible that the Lord's Supper be restricted to church or to a tiny morsel of bread and a gulp of wine. Instead, evidence says the early church combined Holy Communion with a love (*agape*) feast.

That hardly suggests a fearfully serious occasion.

2. Communion symbolizes our unity in Christ. It is not hard to see the fractures inside and among Christians. This is sad. But at the same time the Bible tells us we are one in Christ.

Somehow we have to believe in a oneness we cannot see and often don't feel. This requires a fresh openness to signs that mean more than we can see, feel or understand. Holy Communion with God through Jesus remains a mystery but is assured by his Word.

To think about it deeply is to become awed by its wonder. Awe can be a kind of fear. But it is not a fear that scares. It is a fear that draws us in humility to a confession that we too are still growing toward unity in Christ. That again becomes cause for praise.

Prepare yourself for Holy Communion—in gratitude and praise—with God and the whole body of Christ.
Bernie Wiebe

THE MENNONITE

OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST

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For I am not ashamed of the gospel: it is the power of God for salvation to every one who has faith, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed through faith for faith; as it is written, "He who through faith is righteous shall live."

A happy exchange

Cornelius J. Dyck

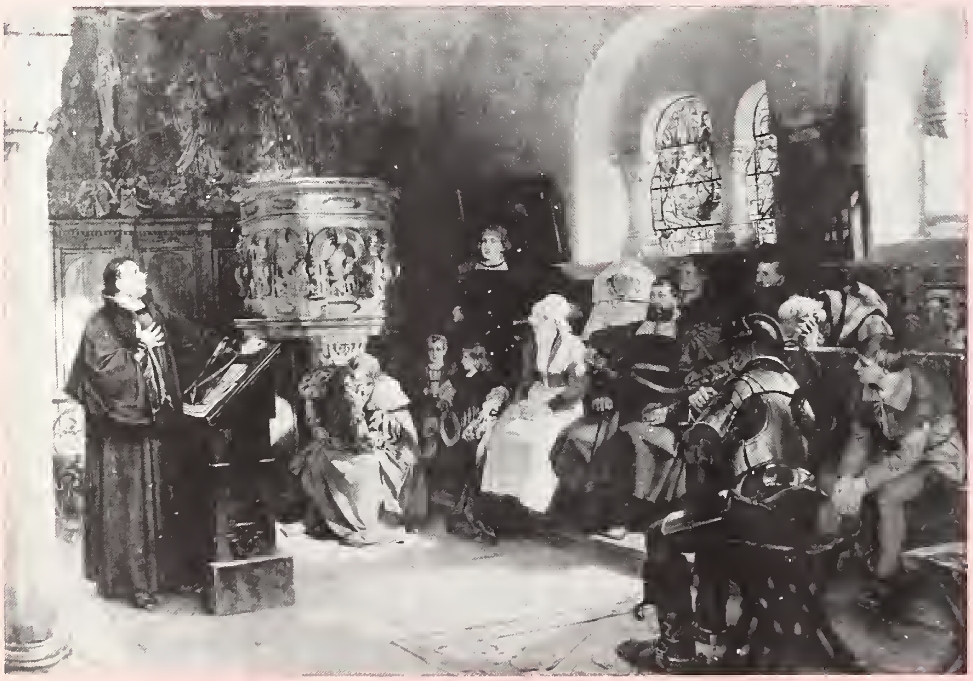
The central insight of the Reformation came to Martin Luther quietly in his study in the tower of the monastery in Wittenberg sometime between 1513 and 1515. It came after months and years of agony, despair, prayer and fasting. When it came, this insight was so simple yet so profound that it changed Christian thought and belief right to our day.

The issue was the justice of God. Luther's sins plagued him terribly, even though he was the most ideal of all monks. He would fast, whip himself, freeze, until fellow monks would find him unconscious on the cobbles of his cell, but he could not find inner peace. Erik Erickson and other psychiatrists have had a field day with Luther, but Roland Bainton is right, I think, when he says, "it is a grave problem to psychoanalyze the dead."

Luther's God was a God of law and order, even wrath. All sin had to be atoned—paid for. And Luther knew day after day that he had failed to be perfect in thought and act. Not a day passed but he fell short of what he knew God expected of him. And so he knew no peace. His soul and his spirit cried out, "O how can I find a gracious and loving God?" He was at the point of despair. He considered suicide.

And then one day—while studying Romans—the last line of 1:17 opened up before him in a new and blinding light: "He who through faith is righteous shall live." He had been taught that righteousness came through doing good, but now suddenly he realized that it was not what he—Martin Luther—did for God that would save him from hell, but what God had done for *him* in Jesus Christ. "He who through *faith* is righteous shall *live*"—not perish with the damned. *O fröhlicher Wechsel* (O happy exchange). Christ had already done it all. All Luther had to do was believe. No wonder he wrote, "Now I felt myself new-born and in Paradise. All the Holy Scriptures looked different to me. . . . This passage in Paul appeared to me as the very gate of heaven."

Luther (left) was able to do much of his writing and translation under the protection of Duke Frederick (right).



Gone was the fear and trembling before a merciless God. By faith in Christ, said Luther, God became for him "a bake-oven full of hot love." Gone was the need to win satisfaction through good works. "The first, highest and most precious of all good works," he wrote, "is faith in Christ." To believe was the only good work God required. From it all other works would flow (*Luther's Works*, vol. 44). To believe in the promise of forgiveness, for example, was in itself forgiveness of sin.

How can that be? But soon the critics came. Some said this would abolish the whole system of sacraments—of which the old church had seven—and all the sacraments were considered good works. To touch them or abolish them would destroy the authority of the church—and also its income. Luther would even abolish purgatory—that state between heaven and hell—where people were supposedly manicured for heaven. How could that be possible? Where then would dead sinners go? They are already cleansed by grace through faith, Luther replied. Christ did it all.

Others came and challenged him with his own method. The Bible was becoming his new authority rather than the Pope. And so they argued it does not say "by faith *alone*" in Romans 3:28 but rather, "We hold that a man is justified by faith apart from works of law." No more. And Luther replied with some heat, "I know right well that the word *solum* was not in the Greek or Latin text. . . . It is a fact that these four letters *s-o-l-a* are not there (but) the word belongs there if the translation is to be clear and strong. I wanted to speak German, not Latin or Greek. . . . One who would speak plainly and clearly about this cutting away of all works must say, "Faith alone justifies us, and not works" (*LW*, vol. 44).

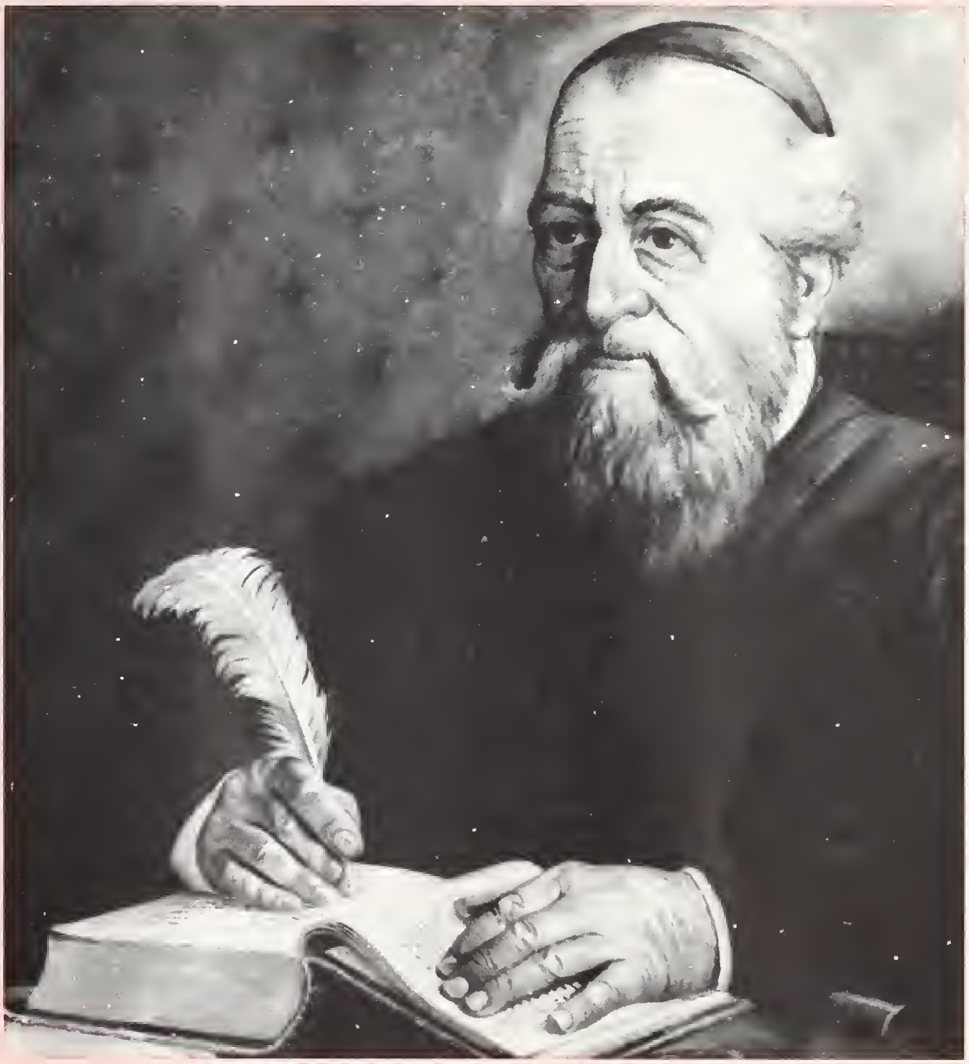
Then what about sin? This had a clear impact on the understanding of sin. If faith and not works was the new order of things, being and believing right was more important than doing. Even if we have faith, we remain sinners all our life—always both sinner and justified (*simul iustus et peccator*). Original sin remains, Luther argued, but after faith it is "like a wound that begins to heal; though it be a wound, yet it is in the course of healing, though it still runs and is sore." We can't help it if we sin. But, some replied, we have free will. But Luther said no. "I wish that the words 'free will' had never been invented," he wrote.

Luther's friend Melanchthon was troubled by this and what it meant for grace. So Luther wrote from his hiding place in the Wartburg, "If you are a preacher of grace, then preach a true and not a fictitious grace. . . . God does not save people who are only fictitious sinners. Be a sinner and sin boldly, but believe and rejoice in Christ even more boldly." This may well have been a paraphrase of Romans 3:8, "And why not do evil that good may come?" While Paul immediately rejects the idea, Luther doesn't (*LW*, vol. 48).

To be told to sin more boldly, albeit to see grace more clearly, was more than a shock; it was a revolution in the interpretation of Scripture. It also caused a minor revolution in the lives of the common people. Some rejoiced with Luther in new peace and freedom in Christ, but many took his teaching to mean that works were not important. Only believe. They began to enjoy a new and false kind of liberty, doing almost whatever they pleased. This was not what Luther had in mind. After one of his visits to the churches he wrote, "Merciful God, what misery I have seen. The common people know nothing at all about Christian doctrine . . . but live like poor cattle and senseless swine, though now that the gospel is come, they have learnt well enough how they may abuse their liberty." And later he wrote, "I could wish that peasants, city folk and the nobility who now abuse the gospel in the most shameful manner were still under the papacy, for now they are nothing but a hindrance, shame and harm to the gospel" (*Church and State in Luther and Calvin*, p. 27).

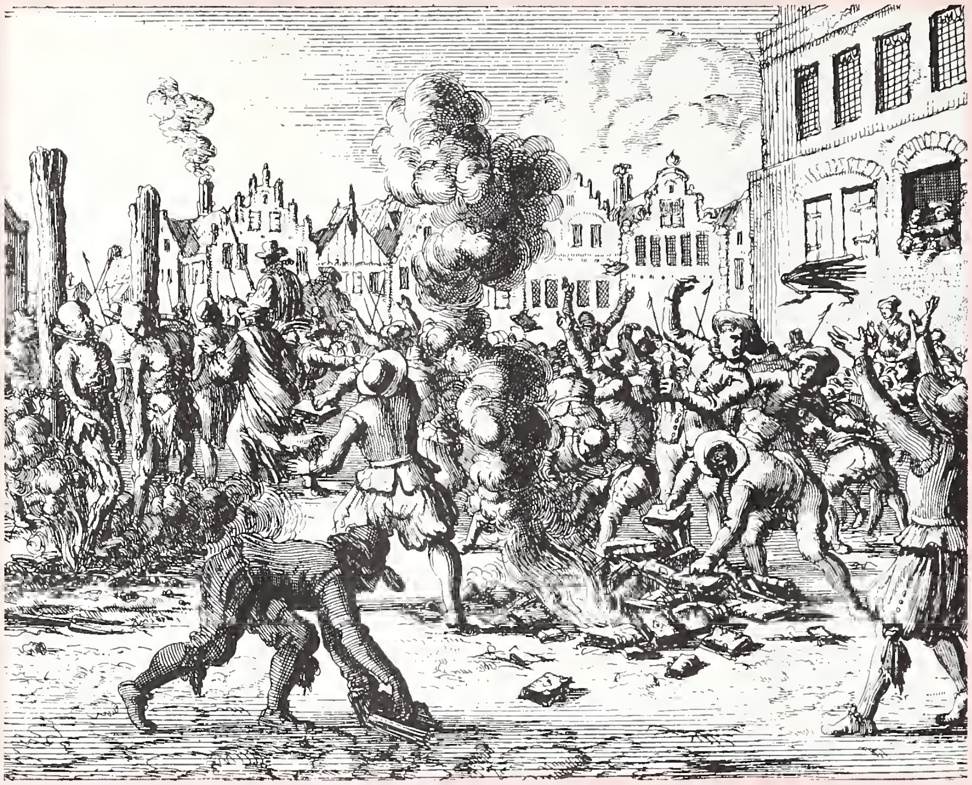
The Anabaptist protest. There was another group—the Anabaptists—who believed Luther's findings were the logical outcome of his teaching about sin and grace. They rejoiced in his rejection of the medieval system of earning merit in heaven by good works and affirmed that Christ was indeed the only way of salvation. But they considered Luther's emphasis misplaced and dangerous. They saw all around them where this new freedom without discipline was leading people. "Faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead," they said, quoting James 2:17.

It was not wrong when the Anabaptists were called "Sermon on the Mount Christians" by many, though they obviously used Paul too. For them faith and praxis were inseparable. Thus Hans Denck wrote, "The means (to come to God) is Christ, whom none may truly know unless he follows after him with his life. And none can follow him unless he has first known him" (*Schriften*, p. 27). Menno Simons joins this theme over and over: "This is the greatest delight and joy of believers, that they in their weakness may walk and live according to the will and word of the Lord. . . . Where sincere and true faith exists . . . there through the blossoming tree of life all manner of precious fruits of righteousness are present, such as the fear and love of God, mercy, friendship, chastity, temperance, humility, confidence, truth, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. For where a sincere, evangelical pious faith is, there also are the genuine evangelical fruits in keeping with the gospel" (*Complete Works*, 338, 342). It was in obedience to the word and will of God that the Anabaptists saw the proof of faith, rather than in a confession of faith or a specific doctrine. So different did their lives become that anyone leading a pure and upright life soon became suspected of being an Anabaptist.


Simons: "This is the greatest delight and joy of believers, that they in their weakness may walk and live according to the will and word of the Lord. . . ."

Salvation: faith and works? Thus the issue was joined for them, and I think for us. Both sides believed in salvation by grace through personal faith. Both believed that works were important. Luther taught clearly that a Christian should do good works out of love for Christ and neighbor as long as he didn't take them as a part of salvation. The issue was the place of good works in relation to faith and to salvation. Was it important how they lived, and is it important how we live, or was and is right believing finally the last word?

It is sometimes said that two strands run through history in parallel fashion and will therefore never meet. One strand begins with Paul and his emphasis on justification by faith, runs through Augustine (d. 430), Thomas



The Anabaptists paid dearly for their conviction that to truly know Christ meant to follow him in life. For many, this meant love for the persecutor and faithfulness until death. Possibly as many as 2,500 Anabaptists died for their faith in the Netherlands and Belgium alone.

Aquinas (d. 1274), Luther, Calvin and the main Reformation bodies which continue to this day. The other strand begins with the Gospels, runs through the monastic St. Francis (d. 1226), the Waldensians and other medieval renewal groups, through the Anabaptists and to their descendants today (*The Believers' Church*, p. 12). Were the two lines incompatible, and are they still? Surely Mennonites do not believe in salvation by works, or do we? And surely those who most stress grace—perhaps what Bonhoeffer called "cheap grace"—do have moral concerns; they sometimes even think they are in the majority. Where then is the tension? The tension lay, and lies, in how salvation is defined *and* the function of both grace and works in bringing it about.

What does salvation mean? For both Luther and the Anabaptists it meant a happy exchange. But where for Luther it meant—at its core—the forgiveness of sin, for the Anabaptists it meant a new life of walking with Christ—discipleship. Luther thought it blasphemy to talk of imitating Christ. There would never be another Christ and no one need try to be one. It was enough for the Christian to believe that the work of Christ on the cross applied to him personally and to rejoice in that reconciliation. But for the Anabaptists imitation was not enough; participation and identification describe it better. This was for them the way of holiness and sanctification.

Salvation for the Anabaptists was both a gift and a process: Ephesians 2:8-9, "For by grace you have been saved . . . it is the gift of God"; but also Romans 8:36, "For thy sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered . . ." and especially the words of Paul in Colossians 1:24, "Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I complete what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the church." The work of Christ is verified and completed in his body—the believers who identify with him and follow him.

Surely the work of Christ was complete, total for all time. Yet in this text Paul sees the body of Christ—the church—so identified with him in suffering and in victory, that they are inseparable. Paul confirms this again in Ephesians 4: Christ is the head of the body, joins and knits it together and leads it on to maturity. This is sanctification. The pressure of this interdependence of Christ and his body is increased further in Hebrews 11, where all those who have lived and died for their faith through the ages are linked with us today in our discipleship when the writer states in v. 40 that "apart from us they should not be made perfect." Before God, Abraham and we are contemporaries. All divine time is in the present. And in this present we—his people—have a part in completing his body in what we are and in what we do as we walk through our calendar of life with Christ.

For the Anabaptists the process of salvation began with conversion—justification if you will—but that was only a part of the larger circle of regeneration. Both Menno Simons and Dirk Philips wrote treatises on the new birth—the only Anabaptists to do so in a major way. But the treatises never separated the new birth from becoming part of the body of Christ. The process was both individual and corporate. There was no spiritual isolation into private subjectivity, but rather nurture in the fellowship of believers.

And so today salvation is a relationship to Christ and a relationship to his body. While these experiences may occur at different times and/or places, they cannot long continue separately. So also faith and works; one may precede the other according to each individual experience, but they are essentially one. We cannot "only believe" without discipling any more than we can truly "only disciple" without believing. So also, in its fullest sense, holiness is a synonym for discipleship and sanctification; it is walking with Christ in his body the church. Salvation begins in justification and grows in ever widening circles to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ" (Epehsians 4:13).

In talking about the Last Judgment, Karl Barth once quipped that he would load all the volumes of his monumental *Church Dogmatics* onto a little red wagon and pull them before the throne of God, hoping that it would suffice to get him in. He was joking. On the other hand, when we read the Matthew 25:31ff account of the Last Judgment, it is all about works and rewards. There is no mention of, "You believed right or taught right or prayed right," but, "I was hungry and you fed me, sick and in prison and you visited me. Enter into the joy of the kingdom."

"For by grace you have been saved through faith" (Ephesians 2:8). "You will know them by their fruits" (Matthew 7:20). •

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What is a Mennonite today?

Robert Kreider

At Mennonite World Conference in Wichita, Kan., in 1978 we got the clear message that not all Mennonites look alike, sing the same songs, have German-sounding names or talk about their faith in the same way. Our president was black and did not speak German.

Mennonites are now in 40 nations, speak 100 languages and have been shaped by 100 cultural traditions. Ethnic definitions of Mennonitism should now be dead. There are Mennonites in many places who sense in their bones they are Mennonites but who would not use the Seven Articles of Schleitheim or the Riis Confession or the three themes of "The Anabaptist Vision" or some 10 points from a Mennonite history book if they attempted to explain what it means to be Mennonite.

Two years ago in travels to Paraguay, Africa (including attendance at the General Council of the MWC) and Europe, we asked questions such as these: "What is a Mennonite?" "What is a Mennonite kind of Christian?"

In the Chaco we were told that the Chulupi, Legua and Guarani Indians do not call themselves "Mennonite," but "evangelical brethren." There, Mennonite is an ethnic classification.

One noon we sat by a waterhole in the Chaco bush on logs and rusty buckets with a Chulupi Indian leader. He and our translator friend passed a horn mug of mati tea back and forth as he responded to our questions. We asked him to tell his life story. This took him a full hour to unfold. We then asked, "What is a Mennonite? How do they differ from other Christians?" His answer did not come out of a Mennonite history book. "Others teach one to be a Christian one day a week. Mennonites teach one to be a Christian seven days a week." A simple but eloquent way of stating the theme of discipleship.

In Asuncion we met a conservative Mennonite family from Lancaster County, Pa., who had been clearing forest in East Paraguay and building a congregation. Now after 11 years the family and three others are moving on to a remote forest area of South Paraguay to repeat the process. Theirs is a kind of migration evangelism. How do they explain to their Paraguayan neighbors what Mennonite Christianity is? He answered, "Mennonites don't go to war. They can see we are plain. They see we don't smoke and do those kinds of things. For us the turning point in getting across our kind of faith came when we didn't retaliate after thieves stole from us. We didn't go to the police. They saw something different."

We asked the same question of a Mennonite leader who grew up in the Chaco and has traveled widely among Mennonites in East Paraguay. He explained, "Mennonites are known for their integrity. When they say 'yes' they mean 'yes.' When they say 'no' they mean 'no.' Second, for the most part they are hard working and clean living. Third, they are looked on as a special kind of German."

We spent an evening with an articulate leader of the 3.7-million-member Methodist Church in South Africa, 70 percent of whom are black. He is white, his people coming in the 1820s from Wales. His wife is from both English and Afrikaner stock. Both are struggling sacrificially against entrenched racial injustice in South Africa.

I asked him what gives him hope to carry on the good fight against overwhelming odds. He acknowledged that he draws from his Methodist roots but quickly added, "also from my Mennonite and Quaker roots." He is committed to the cause of peace, justice and a nonviolent "third way."

In the mountain kingdom of Lesotho we met a Bible Society official who has studied in South Africa and England and is a leader among the black independent churches. Having the gift of storytelling, he told us of how the gospel came to his people. We asked him what the word "Mennonite" means to him. He told of a Mennonite mission executive coming to his office and saying, "We want to help the existing churches." He recalled, "I have so many visitors, but this one rang a bell. I never heard of this before. This is the thing we have wanted. I proposed that they could help in Sunday school education." He continued, "Mennonites seemed different. I liked their conscientious way of life. They are like the Quakers. I had attended the Friends school at Selly Oak in England. I felt comfortable with their peace teaching."

He then proceeded to tell the story of the founder of the Lesotho nation, King Moshoeshoe I, "who said we must be a peaceful nation. We grew up with stories of peace. My father had told us an old story of our people looking for a man who would be a king of peace and committed to the rule of peace."

In one of the early sessions of the MWC an East African brother was asked publicly, "What do you understand it means to be Mennonite?" He groped for an answer and it came out something like this, "Mennonites are those who were evangelized by Mennonite missionaries." Sensing that this was not an adequate answer, a wiry little colleague from Tanzania leapt to his feet and ticked off in staccato fashion and with conviction a half dozen distinctives: "peace, believer's baptism, authority of the Bible, discipleship, helping one another, evangelism, integrity in conduct. . . ."

I asked a brother from Zaire what the marks of a Mennonite Christian are. His response took an unexpected turn. "In Zaire, Mennonites are those Christians who do not believe in education." He explained that missionaries have taught them to be on guard against the dangers of higher education. He had attended university and had written a dissertation on Karl Barth's conception of the state. In response to my question he could give an answer full of understanding of the Anabaptist genius. However, he preferred to turn the tables on me and to ask of me, "What is a Mennonite?"

A woman who had been active in missions sought to distill the essence of Mennonitism. She suggested that "servanthood in Christ is what distinguishes Mennonites."

A Dutch brother and sister, who had been missionaries in Indonesia, responded to my question by saying, "First, Mennonites view the church seriously; second, they take the New Testament seriously; third, they have a strong desire to stick together to preserve the unity of the body of Christ."

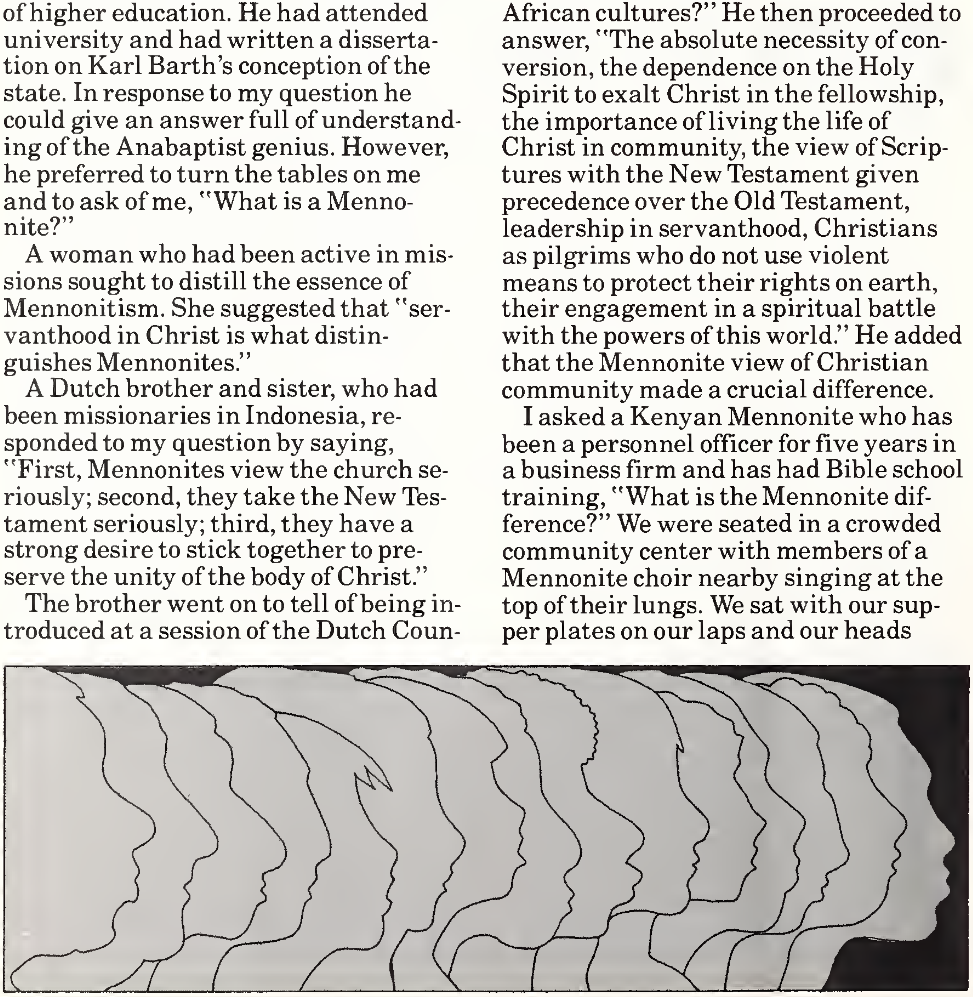
The brother went on to tell of being introduced at a session of the Dutch Council of Churches as a Mennonite thus: "A people which has taught the Dutch church so much as to suffering humbly for the faith." The speaker encouraged him to tell his people to continue "to keep alive the theme of suffering for Christ."

A German Mennonite explained that if one were to ask an *Umsiedler*—a recent Mennonite immigrant from Russia—what a Mennonite is, his answer would be, "those who speak Low German." If the *Umsiedler* were more broadly acquainted he would say that "Mennonites believe in the new birth and believer's baptism."

An Asian brother stated that Mennonites are evangelical Christians who emphasize the first-century model. He has to do much explaining when he travels. "Mennonite? What's that?" He told of recent riots in his district and much destruction of property. Mennonite churches organized a kind of "Mennonite disaster service," helping their own people and their neighbors alike. He sensed that people now could better understand what it meant to be Mennonite.

A Mennonite mission leader who has spent much of his life in Africa posed his own question, "How do Anabaptist themes find expression in the variety of African cultures?" He then proceeded to answer, "The absolute necessity of conversion, the dependence on the Holy Spirit to exalt Christ in the fellowship, the importance of living the life of Christ in community, the view of Scriptures with the New Testament given precedence over the Old Testament, leadership in servanthood, Christians as pilgrims who do not use violent means to protect their rights on earth, their engagement in a spiritual battle with the powers of this world." He added that the Mennonite view of Christian community made a crucial difference.

I asked a Kenyan Mennonite who has been a personnel officer for five years in a business firm and has had Bible school training, "What is the Mennonite difference?" We were seated in a crowded community center with members of a Mennonite choir nearby singing at the top of their lungs. We sat with our supper plates on our laps and our heads close together to hear each other. He spoke of "non-resistance . . . baptism after adult conversion . . . Jesus as Lord in a special way . . . trying to show what it is to live like Jesus . . . not that we are so good."



A Dutch brother spoke of Mennonites, unlike many communions, as being able to embrace fundamentalists and liberals in their fellowship without breaking apart. "Non-resistance and discipleship, yes," he said, "but there is also an affirming community, seeking for unity in Christ among us."

A pastor who has lived through the painful years of civil war in Zimbabwe explained that being a Mennonite and Brethren in Christ draws people together because of the "the new birth, living out every day as the day of the new birth." He continued, "This non-resistance is enormously important to us, to me. It permits me to go anywhere in the world and in any situation to feel free."

I asked someone working with the independent churches in Africa, "What is your perception of Mennonites?" The answer, he said, was incarnated in people. "Mennonite is Ed and Irene Weaver, Ron Sawatsky. . . . That is being a Mennonite."

A missionary in Africa observed that "the essence of Mennonitism in Africa or anywhere is relational, not propositional. Keith from Jamaica meets Abraham of Ghana. Abraham meets Kiseli of Tanzania. Kiseli meets Ndlovu from Zimbabwe." Another from East Africa reflected on it in a similar manner, "Mennonites have a special view of the church. 'Trust' is the essential word in describing it." Then came to mind the woman from Kenya who stood up in a meeting of the General Council of the MWC and asked in Swahili one simple question and then sat down, "Why do you men not trust us women with responsibility in the church?" She seemed to sense acceptance from her brothers and sisters which gave her freedom to speak with candor. Strong conflicting statements from men and women followed. I felt good about it. In that body was both diversity and trust.

What are the irreducible and distinctive elements in being Mennonite when these people come from 100 cultures, speak 100 languages and live in 40 nations? Can one find a modest and authentic answer to the question What is a Mennonite Christian? Textbook definitions have less value now. I am pleased that brothers and sisters in many faraway places are helping us to understand what it means to be Mennonites and Christians. They have gifts of putting into words in fresh and diverse ways their sense of Mennonite peoplehood in Christ. •

Creation offers a repose

Ken Peterson

There is a rest found among the works of creation. The ocean breeze and splashing seas bring relaxation with the tension of the incoming tide and the release of the outgoing tide. Splashing on the shore, then retreating to the sea. A relaxation rythmn has been breathed into creation. The beautiful, lush green hills lift the soul with wonder as sights and sounds recreate inspiration deep within. The hills are alive with music, and in the majestic mountains we find returning strength.

Creation is a gift of repose to us. There we find our rest, our peace, our quietness and joy. In the evening we can climb the hill, look into the quiet night sky, survey the hosts of heaven and know that God is looking over all of creation—looking over you and breathing rest upon you.

When God finished the vast array of creation, God rested. When God completed his masterpice of many wonders, God looked upon his creation and was pleased with the starry hosts, the sun, the moon, this special planet, the oxygen for breath of life, the splashing seas to refresh us, the rising continents upon which to place our feet and build our homes, the beauty all around of flowers and trees, food to eat, the fish that swim in the sea, the birds that are guided in flight, the beasts of the field as friend and meat, and man and woman created in God's image. With a sense of accomplishment God rewarded himself by taking time off to enjoy the wonders of all he had done and to pronounce a blessing—"very good." Creation's repose is the "very good" rest creation is blessed with. Out in the fields with God you may find your rest, for creation has a repose that God breathed into its very existence.

Every stage of creation is ended with a time of reflection—"the evening and the morning"—the rest of the night, the quiet peace after a hard day's work. God has gifted us with day for work and night for rest. After six days of labor there is a special day of rest. The day calls to us: Come work and accomplish. The night calls to us: Receive your reward of rest. The six days call us to labor and create that worthy goals might be fulfilled. The seventh day calls us to rest, spiritual inspiration and communion with the God of rest.

Sleep is a vital need for health. When we sleep, the muscles relax, the heartbeat and breathing rate slow down. The brain sends out slower but larger waves. The repose of sleep is a gift of God to restore physical and mental energy. During exercise of both physical and mental activity the body loses energy, stores up sluggish waste material and becomes tired from emotional tensions. The gift of sleep gives the body opportunity to restore energy, repair tissues, relax from mental tensions, solve emotional and intellectual problems through dream images. The body becomes strong again and the mind finds emotional adjustment. Without sleep we lose energy and become quick-tempered, we have trouble dealing with others, concentration becomes difficult, we are easily distracted and make many mistakes.

Along with the rest of sleep, humanity has been created with a need for a sabbath rest—a day of rest and worship. The seventh day of rest is meant for our good, for our health, for our energetic recreation. During the French Revolution the radicals wished to banish religion, so they abolished the "Sunday" day of rest. It did not work. They had to bring it back for their health. Built into the fabric of our bodies, our minds and our souls is the need for rest and spiritual refreshment.

The Lord of the Sabbath invites us, "Come unto me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and you shall find rest unto your souls" (Matthew 11:28, 29). *Last in a series on Genesis*

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Do Mennonite artists fit in?

Allan Siebert

"Prophet, clown, revealer, mirror, disturber, celebrant." Those are roles of the artist in a community, Bob Regier told a good-sized crowd at a symposium of Mennonites and artists last April in Winnipeg.

Regier was speaking in the chapel of Canadian Mennonite Bible College. With him were nine Canadian artists with some connection to the Mennonite community—from four provinces—unsure of what to expect. They had been summoned by a committee from the Mennonite Festival of Art and Music and assisted by a grant from the multiculturalism program of the Canadian Department of the Secretary of State.

Collectively assembled on a curving haphazard arc of chairs, they were like a living art-piece—an assemblage thrown together by the wind and soon to disperse—shifting in their seats, muttering wisecracks, unused to the spotlight, but for one evening presenting themselves as "Canadian artists of Mennonite heritage in dialogue with the community."

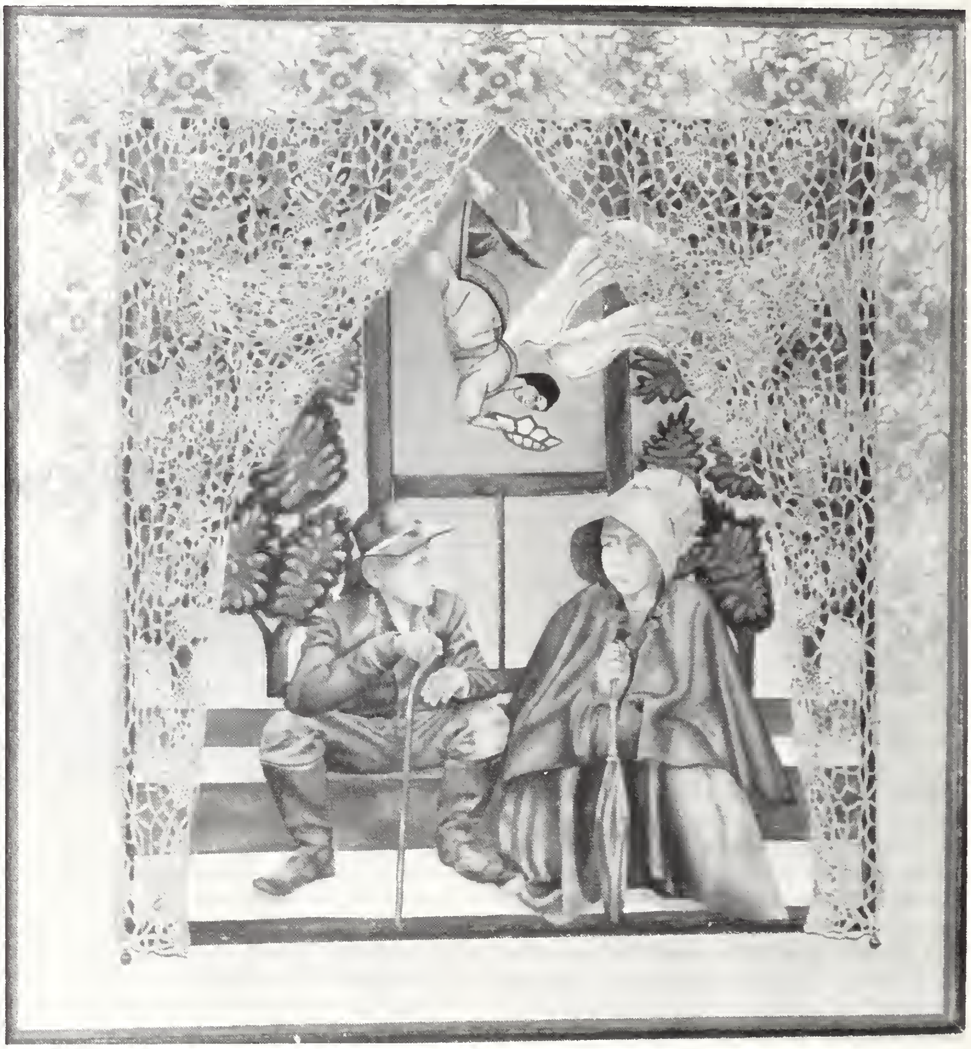
Getting that dialogue going among Mennonites isn't easy, Regier continued. Then he told a story. A young Mennonite announced his desire to be an artist. The community's response was a visit from the bishop who informed him that "if he wanted to paint, the meetinghouse needed another coat."

Communities are "uneasy with the language of vision," Regier concluded. To a community dominated by the work ethic—"often utilitarian and pragmatic"—the artist brings gifts of mystery and ambiguity that stretch the mind and senses.

Regier spoke from years of experience as an artist for Mennonite agencies and teacher at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan. "He put into words everything I would want to say," said Bill Epp, the first artist to stand up and respond during the open forum.

Epp is a sculptor from Saskatoon. "People think artists are unusual beings," he said. "But I've found that artists are very normal people," he added, grinning and looking anything but normal with his work-roughened hands, gray ponytail and scuffed sneakers.

Guided by forum chairman Roy Vogt, the talk circled round and the artists spoke briefly about their work or their view of themselves within a society that doesn't quite know what to make of them.

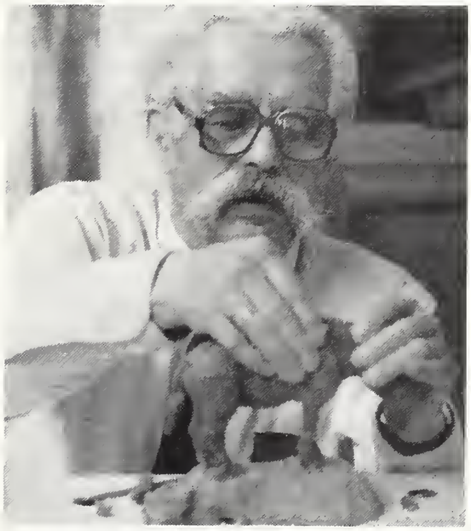


This mixed media work by Susan Shantz is titled ". . . and Suddenly."

Susan Shantz of Waterloo, Ont., described her "assemblages" as an attempt to bring renewed meaning to objects. David Hunsberger, also of Waterloo, talked about the enjoyment of technical innovations in art. He makes serigraphs and believes "it's important to establish a visual link with the viewer that the viewer can accept."

Free-spirited and uninhibited Wanda Koop, a Winnipeg painter, spoke of art as "a visual language for feeling and emotion." Of her 10 years as a full-time artist, she said, "You're constantly on the edge. It's an isolated, lonely life . . . you have to be convinced about what you are doing." She was good-natured but frank about the fact that she "always felt out of place in the Mennonite community."

Many of the artists were self-conscious, even shy about talking in public about their work. Photographers Ken Loewen of Altona, Man., and Ernie Kroeger of Winnipeg said little, hinting that their photographs speak for themselves. Gerald Loewen of Winnipeg stated that his sculptures emerged from a "playfulness" with objects and ideas. His humorous mixed-media sculpture "Electronic Verse Finder" was one of



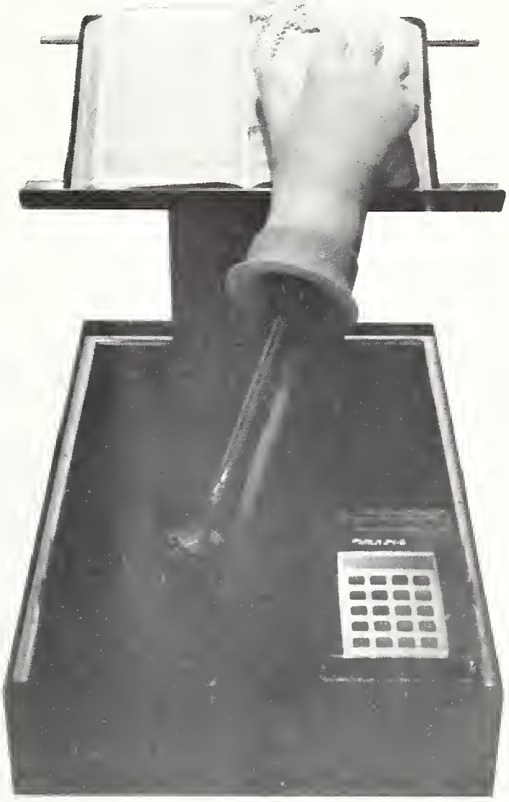
Sculptor Cornelius Martens

the more popular pieces on display at the Mennonite Heritage Centre on the CMBC campus.

Other artists in attendance were sculptors Aganetha Dyck of Winnipeg and Cornelius Martens of Coaldale, Alta. Martens, a shaggy mustachioed man who would look more at home behind a team of horses, said off-handedly that he had been making a good living at producing bronze sculptures for 14 years and "it's just a real nice life."

When asked to comment on the paths they had followed and whether they viewed themselves as "Mennonite" artists, Susan Shantz was the most forthright, saying she is "uncomfortable with being described as Mennonite." At showings she asks not to be identified as Mennonite because she does not want her art to be stuck with an "ethnic tag." "The themes I'm dealing with are Mennonite, but they could also be Ukrainian or something else."

At the 12th annual Mennonite Festival of Art and Music, where these artists later displayed their works, not too many found their way to the alcove for a look at these creations. Those who came seemed curious, especially about Loewen's "Electronic Verse Finder" and Shantz's depiction of the Annunciation with a young Old Order Mennonite couple in the foreground (called ". . . and Suddenly"). A persistent few wondered what these artists might want to say to the large festival crowd.



Gerald Loewen's "Electronic Verse Finder" attracted much attention at the exhibition.

Miracles reconcile us

Dennis Lehman

He spoke to the lame, the dumb
Made whole they could walk and talk.
He speaks to us, be whole,
Walk and talk as one in Christ.
He spoke to the man with a withered hand,
Obeying, he stretched out a useful hand.
He speaks to us, stretch out a friendly helping hand.
He spoke to the blind,
Obeying in faith, he washed and saw.
He speaks to us, first remove the log from your own eye
And see God's love for all.
He spoke to the one named Legion,
Emptied of evil, the man lived again in fellowship able to communicate.
He speaks to us, be empty of animosity, jealousy, selfishness,
Be filled with love, be able to affirm others, willing to serve.
He spoke to Lazarus,
He awoke though dead and obeying came out.
He speaks to us, *be reconciled*!

One out of every three employees surveyed in 47 businesses say they sometimes steal from their employers—and the thefts involved more than taking a pencil or pen home from the office. John Clark, the sociologist who directed the survey, said thefts from employers ranged from taking office supplies home against company policies to improper use of a company discount policy.

In a letter in the September issue of *Synapses*, a man from Manila writes, "When I heard the news about the Korean airliner that was shot down, . . . I was reminded of a similar incident. . . . One day [Captain Acedera] and a student pilot were on a regular flying lesson in Pampanga near the U.S. military base [in the Philippines]. But on that day Acedera's plane came very close to the Clark Air Base and was shot down by the U.S. military . . . and the two pilots died. . . . [Acedera's daughter] said that her father and other students regularly do their flying instruction in that area and that the personnel at the U.S. base is aware of this."

NEWS

Taiwanese churches respond to new religion law

Newton, Kan.—The executive committee of the Fellowship of Mennonite Churches in Taiwan (FOMCIT) has formally expressed its opposition to the "Law to Protect Religion" proposed in June by the Taiwanese government's Ministry of the Interior.

The committee "vigorously discussed" the legislation at its meeting in Taipei on July 26 and decided to oppose the new law and ask the government to stop drafting it.

"We believe that the content of this law is in conflict with the Constitution of the Republic of China," the FOMCIT response said. "It is not only impossible to protect religious groups by law, but such laws actually interfere with people's freedom of religion. If this law is enforced, it is very likely that it will produce dissatisfaction among religious groups, causing conflict between government and people, destroying social harmony, depriving the government's appeal and affecting the international reputation of the country.

"Therefore we ask the government, by its good will, to stop this draft to protect people's freedom of religion because it is against truth and the people's will. At the same time, we call on all Christians and churches to be alert, pray constantly and ask God to reveal his righteousness, love and peace in our society."

When asked which parts of the proposed legislation were most troublesome for FOMCIT's executive, Commission on Overseas Mission secretary for Asia Peter Kehler pointed to several articles linking the function of religious organizations to "national policy" and the "public interest."

Article IX, for example, states that "propagation should be in accord with present basic national policy, without jeopardizing national security, fulfilling the duties of the citizens, observing public order, promoting traditional morality. . . ."

"How will a government that insists on universal military service view a denomination that teaches the peace position?" asked Kehler, reflecting on FOMCIT's dilemma. According to the law's current draft, the government can dissolve, reorganize, annul actions or decisions or replace officers of any temple, church or religious organization it feels does not comply with the new regulations.

The same principle is applied to money collected by religious groups. Article XVII says that "the income of temples, churches and religious organizations must be used exclusively for religious rites and religious activities, for that which is in the public interest and for charity enterprises." How loosely or strictly the government will enforce such measures is Kehler's concern.

The legislation, if adopted, would also impose restrictions on who could be named by religious groups as their leaders or "religious propagators." Those who have been convicted of insurrection and treason, or have such charges pending against them, would be disqualified.

Kehler sees such stipulations as being directed at people such as Presbyterian leaders Kao Chun-ming and Lin Wen-chen, who were imprisoned for aiding a fleeing dissident after police broke up a

The 1983 FOMCIT executive: seated (left to right), Han Vandenberg, Timothy Liau, Sheldon Sawatzky, Verney Unruh; standing, Andrew Lu, Ezra Hsieh, Arthur Ho, Simon Wung, Norman Chien.

Media Division is the new name for the former Faith and Life Radio and Television Committee. The change was agreed upon at an April 8-9 meeting in Elkhart, Ind. The change comes with the adoption of a new five-year plan for the Media Division, which projects more involvement in television and in the emerging communication technologies like cable TV. "The committee agreed that new directions for the future would require a new name," said Lauren Friesen, MD committee chairman. "The name Media Division enables the committee to focus on a broader area of work."

An Urban Ministry Seminar will be held Jan. 3-15, 1984, in Washington. Sponsored by Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Ind., and Eastern Mennonite Seminary, Harrisonburg, Va., the seminar will examine the church's role, mandate, problems and future in inner-city ministries. Myron S. Augsburger, pastor of Washington Community Fellowship, and Donald R. Jacobs, executive director of the Mennonite Christian Leadership Foundation, will teach the course. For information write to: AMBS, 3003 Benham Ave., Elkhart, IN 46517, or Eastern Mennonite Seminary, Harrisonburg, VA 22801.

By almost a 2-to-1 ratio, American Catholics favor permitting their clergy to marry and continue to function as priests, a new Gallup poll shows. The survey conducted this spring revealed that 58 percent of those asked said they favored married priests, while 33 percent were opposed. The rest had no opinion.

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massive demonstration for human rights on Dec. 10, 1979. Kao and Lin are still in jail, convicted of "harboring a seditious criminal."

Still another part of the new law stipulates that all religious activity should be carried on in a uniform language. Article VIII reads, "Temples and churches which have not registered according to this law will not be allowed to engage in propagation. The aims of propagation should be the proclamation of doctrines and the observance of religious rites. The above activities should be carried out openly and in the language(s) of the country."

"What they really mean is 'Mandarin only,' " comments Kehler. "The government has confiscated all literature (magazines, newspapers, Bibles, tracts, etc.) which is not printed in Chinese characters. It is insisting that all communication shall be in Mandarin Chinese. All of the tribal churches use their own language, as do many of the Taiwanese. If this law is enacted, would these churches be closed down by the government if they do not use the Mandarin language for their worship services?"

Although Kehler sees some dangers in the draft legislation, he also recognizes the legitimacy of some of its provisions. "Every government is entitled to know what is happening within the country and to be concerned that organizations within its borders exist for the benefit of society. Enough information should be made available to the government so that it can know what each group believes, what it represents and whether or not it is legitimate."

The implications for COM in the proposed law would be connected to provisions under Articles V and IX, which state that foreign religious organizations must submit to the Taiwanese government "a statement of guarantee to propagate their religion without violating the laws of this country and without involving themselves in any activity not related to the purpose of their religious organizations." At the same time, "propagation should be in accord with present basic national policy."

Representatives of various FOMCIT churches gather for a layman's retreat in August.

Catholic bishops in Taiwan have also seen the document as being overzealous in its attempts to "protect" religion. In a letter sent to the Ministry of the Interior on June 29, the bishops offered a series of "reflections" on the proposed law.

"The Catholic Church in this island of Free China enjoys full freedom and has the additional protection of the Constitution," the letter said. "There really is no need for the government to enact a special law on its behalf. Besides, it may be said in general that many of the clauses in the new law seem to be concerned with control rather than protection. This creates the impression that the government is merely disguising the reality of control under a blanket of protection. This is quite contrary to the spirit advocated by President Chiang Chin Kuo, which stresses sincerity in dealing with people. This is not an appropriate way for the government to handle the people's affairs." *Larry Cornies*

Schmidt appointed to conference-wide assignment

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—Norman J. Schmidt, pastor of East Swamp Mennonite Church in Quakertown, Pa., has accepted an invitation from the General Conference's General Board to undertake a variety of ministries to the conference constituency, beginning in January 1984.

Schmidt will be available to serve as preacher, teacher and resource person to congregations in both Canada and the United States. The length of his assignment is one year, assuming there will be sufficient requests and financial resources. Schmidt will be leaving the pastorate of East Swamp Church on Jan. 10, 1984, after 20 years of service.

In a letter to General Conference pastors and churches, Schmidt listed some of his areas of interest as being Bible conferences, evangelism, family life, marriage and marriage enrichment, retreats, preaching and teaching, counseling and missions. Interested churches or individuals should contact him directly concerning specific engagements.

The appointment, according to general secretary Vern Preheim, is "a venture of faith in many ways, including finances." Schmidt will not be salaried, either by General Conference or East Swamp Church, but will rely primarily on honoraria from congregations for both living and travel expenses. Preheim said, however, that the conference would make $2,500 available for travel "because we want smaller groups with limited resources also to benefit from [Norman and Janis Schmidt's] gifts. Therefore, we encourage all interested parties to inquire and explore possibilities."

Until Jan. 10, 1984, Schmidt can be reached at East Swamp Mennonite Church, 25 East Swamp Road, Quakertown, PA 18951, telephone (215) 536-4532.

A celebration was held in First Mennonite Church of Calgary on Sept. 18 to honor Peter Heidebrecht and John Kroeger for 25 years of ministry. Both were ordained in July 1958 and have served the church since. The church made the transition to the paid pastoral system when Jacob Wiebe was hired in 1965, but the ministerial council has continued to work together.

Peacemaking in a Nuclear Age III, an interchurch conference, will be held Nov. 4-5 at the First United Methodist Church, 330 N. Broadway, in Wichita, Kan. Featured speakers are Lloyd J. Dumas, associate professor of political economy at the University of Texas at Dallas, and Pat Kenoyer, a Catholic Sister of Loretto and psychologist. The conference will also include 23 workshops. To register, send $5 ($6 after Oct. 28) for adult and $2.50 ($3.50 after Oct. 28) for children under 15 to Pine Valley Christian Church, 5620 E. 21st St., Wichita, KS 67226.

Perspective '84 is expected to bring together 500 young adults ranging from 22 to 30+ years of age. It will be held at the Leamington Hotel in Minneapolis Feb. 16-19, 1984. Virginia Mollenkott will be the main speaker, and Perry Yoder, professor of Bible and religion at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., will serve as Bible study leader. Individuals should make application for limited travel assistance through their local congregations prior to Dec. 15. Registrations before that date are $35 U.S./$40 Canadian. Add $10 for late registration. Contact your church or Meribeth Sprunger, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, for a registration form.

COM approves insert, sets policy for seconding personnel

Members of the Commission on Overseas Mission (left to right): Kathleen Driedger, Anita Froese, James Juhnke, Harold Rittenhouse, John R. Friesen, Larry Kehler, Erwin Rempel, Jake Harms, Jeanne Zook, Anne Falk, William Block, Alice Ruth Ramseyer, Al Bauman, Larry Tschetter and Jessie Gaeddert.

St. Paul, Minn. (GCMC)—With six new people on the 14-member commission, orientation was emphasized at the Commission on Overseas Mission's midyear meetings held Sept. 8-11. The five staff and the experienced commission members explained to the new members the purpose, vision and priorities of COM, as well as the manner in which COM functions in relationships with the Canadian and U.S. constituencies, missionaries, national churches and staff.

Robert Ramseyer, director of Mission Training Center, Elkhart, Ind., led a session on "Anabaptist Perspectives on Current Missiological Issues" and urged COM to practice flexibility and a "case by case" approach.

In order to reassess the total mission program in light of the statement of purpose, it was decided to spend this triennium, 1984-1986, in a process of evaluation and recasting of priorities and visions. A major consultation will be held toward the end of this triennium.

Meribeth Sprunger, secretary of mission communications, presented a proposal which the commission approved for a quarterly publication, titled *Comments*, which is to be included as an insert in *The Mennonite* and *Der Bote* and sent to other interested people and churches. The purpose of *Comments* is to share, inform, teach and report about COM outreach and partnership overseas.

An increasing emphasis is being given to missionaries' need to have orientation, not only for their service overseas, but also for re-entry into North American society. Ways were explored to make the annual retreats and seminars more effective in this regard.

It was decided to accept the recommendation of an administrative trip to Latin America in early 1984 by Glendon Klaassen, secretary for Latin America, and commission member Larry Tschetter of Freeman, S.D. Personnel in several countries are requesting visits.

Recently the COM staff has been asked to consider the option of seconding COM missionaries to non-Mennonite agencies. After considerable research and discussion of the issues involved, the commission decided that it should place personnel only into other programs where there can be close contact and some administrative involvement. "Therefore, it is our general policy to finance and second personnel only to non-Mennonite mission-sending agencies which are in close proximity to our programs and purpose," commissioners said.

In light of occasional crisis situations overseas and the need for sensitive reporting to our church constituencies, it was decided that "staff work with appropriate people or agencies to propose general policy guidelines for mobilizing prayer support and communicating information to North American churches in overseas crisis situations in which mishandled information might endanger the safety of church people overseas."

The commission discussed at some length the difficulties in the church in India. The conference there has been involved in court cases brought against it by several of its members. Dissident groups are meeting separately. It was decided that the commission, through its staff, communicate to the church in India its deep concern and sustained prayer for the church.

The August issue of *Indochina Issues* gives a preview of public television's 13-part history of the Vietnam War, which began in October. The 12-page special issue, titled "Vietnam: Television Takes Another Look at the War," includes a review of the series, highlights of each program and suggested background reading. Single copies are $1. Quantity discounts are available. Write to: Indochina Project, Center for International Policy, 120 Maryland Ave., N.E., Washington, DC 20002. Ask for *Indochina Issues*, number 39.

A retreat was held Sept. 22-24 at Camp Mennoscah, near Murdock, Kan., for members of the Western District's spirituality task force. This group was formed to meet the growing desire of people to have and nurture a deeper and more satisfying experience of God. The purpose of the retreat was to provide members of the task force with a common experience, to encourage personal devotional enrichment and to learn from the experiences of others who have been involved in the practice of spiritual formation. Catholic Sisters Cathy and Mary Kevin served as resource persons.

The new school year is in full swing at Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg, with a record 190 full-time students enrolled, 15 more than last year. There are also 42 part-time students. A majority of the students, 143, are of General Conference background.

Consultation explores food production challenges for Africa

Nairobi, Kenya (MCC)—Mennonite Central Committee agriculturists from Botswana, Ethiopia, Zambia, Tanzania and Mozambique met with African church leaders, agricultural consultants and administrators to discuss possibilities for increasing African food production. The meetings were held at the St. Julian Anglican Retreat Center near Nairobi, Kenya, Sept. 18-21.

The meetings grew out of a December 1982 MCC executive committee action "that MCC commit itself to undertake a serious food production effort in Africa beginning in 1983."

Edgar Stoesz, associate executive secretary for MCC, opened the meetings with the reminder that "within our lifetimes, the population of Africa will double. Our task is to grow two ears of maize where one grows now."

Agriculturists from each of the five countries presented profiles on their countries—examining current agricultural realities and present MCC program involvements. They also presented recommendations for new or expanded agricultural programs.

Other areas addressed in the five country profiles were a review of government agricultural policies, traditional agricultural practices, the role of extension and research work in agriculture and the involvement of other non-governmental agencies in agriculture.

One issue brought up repeatedly in the discussions was the influence of urbanization on the food problem. Although the populations of most African countries are still largely rural, rates of urbanization are as high as 8.7 percent annually. Rural food production, mainly carried out on the subsistence level, does not produce a surplus which can feed the burgeoning population in the cities.

The urban demand for food has exacerbated serious economic problems as limited foreign exchange is used to buy imported food. Many urban dwellers prefer eating imported wheat, rather than local foods such as sorghum.

In addition, the subsistence farmer has little motivation to provide surplus produce for markets that are often inaccessible due to deteriorating roads and lack of transportation. Food prices are controlled by governmental marketing systems, further discouraging the village farmer from increasing production.

Another question brought up repeatedly during the discussion was where MCC's mandate to work on agricultural needs is coming from. Felix Mokobi, head of the Food Resources Department of the government of Botswana, replied that the call is coming from the African church, although that mandate is not perceived as related narrowly to food production.

Still another question was raised over the assumption that improved food production would automatically lead to the reduction of hunger in Africa. Several participants reminded the group that some governmental economic policies also contribute to the cause of hunger. Storing, preserving and marketing difficulties also play into the problems of hunger in African nations.

Another factor complicating the agricultural situation is the continuing wars afflicting many of the countries surveyed. The conflicts have displaced villagers and disrupted food production and distribution, greatly exacerbating an already fragile situation.

Ministers, spouses get acquainted at central offices

The people pictured above took part in the annual Ministers Get Acquainted seminar held at General Conference central offices in Newton, Kan., Sept. 26-28. First row (left to right) William Rempel, J. Andrew Stoner, Earl Cater, Jim Brown, John Schrock, John Wiebe; second row, Winona Rempel, Anita Stoner, Erma Cater, Marcia Yoder, Argentina Peralta, Wanda Wiebe, Jacob T. Friesen; standing, Vern Preheim, Ken and Ricki Buller, Renee Sauder, Bernie Wiebe, Raphael Peralta, Anita and Joshua So, Daniel Cheung. Not pictured: Lynette and Steve Ratzlaff

Tom Sine, a noted Christian futurist and author of *The Mustard Seed Conspiracy*, spoke recently at Columbia Bible Institute, Clearbrook, B.C. Sine argued that Christians must, from a renewed sense of stewardship, abandon an indulgent lifestyle. Also, Christians must learn to prayerfully, thoughtfully and methodically anticipate future trends if they are to be effective in ministry.

Witness for Peace in Nicaragua is a project being organized to counter the U.S.-backed invasion of Nicaragua by counter-revolutionary troops based in Honduras. In July about 150 Christians from the United States held a peace vigil in Nicaragua along the Honduran border. Nicaraguan Christians strongly requested that the vigil continue. Volunteers for a core group in the border town of Jalapa who go for longer-term assignments are needed (three months minimum, Spanish required), as are short-term volunteers who go for one- or two-week visits. For more information contact MCC Peace Section, 21 S. 12th St., Akron, PA 17501.

Wheat, milk powder and canned beef were shipped to El Salvador at the end of August by Mennonite Central Committee. MCC donated 1,500 tons of wheat, grown by Mennonite Canadian farmers and to be exchanged for corn and beans in El Salvador, 100 tons of milk powder and 50 tons of canned beef in the first phase of a 12-month food aid effort. This shipment is part of a $3.4 million ecumenical project coordinated by the Archdiocese of San Salavador. MCC also donated $10,000 to help with administrative costs related to the distribution.

Delegation brings Central America concerns to Washington

Washington (MCC)—On Sept. 21 four Mennonites officially representing the Mennonite Church, the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Central Committee met with U.S. government officials and congressional staff to express the concerns of North American Mennonites regarding Central America. The visit was a follow-up to the Bethlehem '83 Resolution on Central America.

The Mennonite delegation included Myron Augsburger, moderator of the Mennonite Church, Donald Steelberg, member of the General Conference's General Board, Delton Franz, director of Mennonite Central Committee's Washington Office Peace Section, and Herman Bontrager, MCC Latin America secretary.

They met with Alfonso Sapia-Bosch, special assistant to the president and a member of the National Security Council on Central American Affairs, and Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs James Michel, as well as seven other State Department and congressional officials.

The delegation reported that their perspective on events in Central America is influenced by the strong relationship that North American Mennonites have with approximately 8,000 Mennonite sisters and brothers in Central America. Currently there are approximately 120 U.S. Mennonites working with Central American churches in agricultural development, health, education, refugee assistance and church planting. "We hear more from ordinary people (the majority) than those with political and economic power," Bontrager told the officials.

In expressing the concerns of the poor in Central America, the delegation spoke for many Mennonites who see the struggle there as more than a struggle between two superpowers. Franz explained, "Government officials need input from people like us who are not locked into either an ideology of the left or the right."

The delegation stated that "Mennonites believe that inequities of centuries of feudal social systems in Central America are erupting in revolution and violence today. Peace with justice will be achieved only if those inequities are addressed."

Augsburger, Steelberg and Bontrager at the U.S. State Department

Augsburger reminded the officials during several sessions that North Americans must respond to basic problems of poverty in Central America and not define Central America as yet another East-West conflict. "Even without Marxism," he explained, "problems would be there."

The concerns, as expressed by Central American Mennonites and U.S. workers in the region, center on the growing militarization in the region. That military build-up, funded in large part by U.S. tax dollars, is currently encouraging the invasion of Nicaragua despite broad-based popular Nicaraguan support for the Sandinista government. Workers in Honduras report that the country is being sucked into the larger regional conflict. Church workers throughout the region are providing aid for the thousands of displaced people in El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala and Nicaragua who are fleeing the fighting.

The delegation told the government officials that U.S. economic aid, which is sorely needed in the region, is overshadowed and rendered ineffective by massive U.S. military intervention and maneuvers.

The Bethlehem '83 Resolution on Central America calls on "the governments of the United States and Canada to actively encourage a negotiated settlement of the conflicts in Central America." The delegation told government officials that political participation in Central America is limited to the elite and that the vast majority of Central Americans have no voice in the government.

Steelberg, in describing the reception they were given during the five hours of meetings, said, "It sounded like they really wanted to hear from us. There was a willingness to listen and our input was appreciated." *Joy Hofer*

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The Canadian Foodgrains Bank, representing five Christian denominations, opened new offices Sept. 1 at 400-280 Smith Street in Winnipeg. Executive director C. W. Loewen said the Foodgrains Bank has already shipped 20,000 metric tonnes (750,000 bushels) of wheat as emergency aid to Africa, India and El Salvador in 1983. Loewen said that every dollar cash or in value of grain quadruples because the Canadian government, through the Canadian International Development Agency, adds three dollars for every dollar donated.

At the semiannual meetings of the 36-member Bethel College (North Newton, Kan.) board of directors Sept. 30-Oct. 2 the major agenda was completing plans for launching a multimillion-dollar centennial drive to celebrate the college's 100th birthday in 1987. Bethel is the oldest of 11 Mennonite colleges in North America. The Bethel board gave final approval to a list of projects to be funded, including a new Library and Media Center, computer equipment and program expansion, and major scholarship and loan endowment funds to assist students.

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Nov. 18-20—MME, Calgary

Nov. 18-20—MME, Spruce Lake, Pa.

Jan. 13-15, 1984—MME, Champaign, Ill.

Jan. 20-22, 1984—MME, Concordia, Kan.

Feb. 17-19, 1984—MME, Lima, Ohio

Feb. 24-26, 1984—MME, Tulsa, Okla.

deaths

Elmer Ediger, retired executive director of Prairie View Mental Health Center, Newton, Kan., died Sept. 22 at the age of 66 following a heart attack. Ediger had served on the staff at Prairie View since 1957, as administrator from 1957 to 1972 and executive director until Sept. 6. During World War II he served as education director and later general director for Civilian Public Service, administered by Mennonite Central Committee. He was director of Mennonite Mental Health Services and executive secretary of voluntary service for MCC in 1946-49. He later served as executive director of the Board of Christian Service of the General Conference from 1951-57. Ediger was married in 1943 to Mildred L. Gerbrand, who died in 1974. In 1975 he married Tina Block, who survives. He is also survived by one son, Mark D. of Palo Alto, Calif.; two daughters, Elaine Burdett of Mulvane, Kan., and Carol Peters of Hesston, Kan.; six brothers, one sister and five grandchildren. A memorial service was held Sept. 24 at Bethel College Church, North Newton, Kan.

Levi Koehn, longtime General Conference pastor, died Oct. 1 at the age of 63. Born March 22, 1920, he married Lillian Ratzlaff in 1945. He graduated from Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., in 1949 and attended Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Chicago. Upon graduation, he served as pastor during the next three decades at Turpin (Okla.) Church, 1951-60; Goessel (Kan.) Church, 1960-68; Bethany Church, Freeman, S.D., 1968-76; and Eden Church, Inola, Okla., 1976-82. He retired to Goessel a year ago. Services were held Oct. 4 at Goessel Church and Oct. 5 at New Hopedale Church, Meno, Okla.

workers

Carmita Bartel, North Battleford (Sask.) Church, began a one-year Mennonite Voluntary Serive term on Aug. 8 as a child-care worker at Sunshine Center in Liberal, Kan. She is a 1983 graduate of Rosthern (Sask.) Junior College and is the daughter of Henry and Melita Bartel of North Battleford.

Richard Boyd, First Presbyterian Church, Hanford, Calif., began a two-year MVS term on July 1 as a computer literacy teacher for Latino Youth at the Pilsen MVS unit in Chicago. A 1982 graduate of Fresno (Calif.) Pacific College with a bachelor's degree in mathematics, he is the son of Jack and Elaine Boyd of Hanford.

Bartel

Boyd

Calvin Certain

Christine Certain

Calvin and *Christine Certain*, Butler Avenue Mennonite Brethren Church, Fresno, Calif., began two-year MVS terms on Sept. 1 as house managers at the Family Tree Emergency Shelter in Arvada, Colo. Calvin is nearing completion of a business administration degree at Fresno Pacific College. His father is John Certain of Glendale, Ariz.; his mother is Lita Aragon of Selma, Calif. Christine is also a former student at Fresno Pacific. Her parents are Rodger and Irma Mierau of Lodi, Calif.

Diane Dahl, First Church, Calgary, began a one-year MVS term on Aug. 13 as a day-care worker in Calgary. A 1983 graduate of Rosthern (Sask.) Junior College, she is the daughter of Ralph and Rita Dahl of Calgary.

Lynette and *Marlo Duerksen*, Alexanderwohl Church, Goessel, Kan., began a one-year MVS term on July 16 as senior service workers in Reedley, Calif. Lynette graduated in May with a nursing degree from Bethel College, North Newton, Kan. Her parents are Chester and Ruth Slagell of Weatherford, Okla. Marlo is a 1977 liberal arts graduate of

Voters in the Irish Republic recently approved a ballot proposal to write stringent anti-abortion restrictions into the country's constitution. Observers, noting that only 54 percent of the country's 2.3 million eligible voters cast ballots, attributed the low turnout to a mixture of apathy and opposition to the Catholic Church's all-out public campaign in favor of the amendment. The vote was interpreted by many as likely to harden opposition to Irish unity in predominantly Protestant Northern Ireland.

Mennonite Mutual Aid's Wellness Program continues to develop, with the recent completion of several pilot projects in Goshen, Ind., area churches. Director Ann Raber has developed the seven-segment program for congregations to use "to pick up on people's own desire to seek wellness actively as a way of life." Topics covered in the program include exercise, nutrition, stress management, spiritual wellness and mental health. Each session incorporates aspects of the different areas, focusing on one issue each week.

Carol Joyce Brun has been named the second highest officer in the 1.75 million-member United Church of Christ. Her duties will include compiling church statistics and telling local congregations "this is what the church is saying" on various topics. The National Council of Churches knows of only one other woman in a top administrative position, Kathryn Baerwold, general secretary of the American Lutheran Church in Minneapolis.

RECORD

Dahl

L. Duerksen

M. Duerksen

Ediger

Hesston (Kan.) College and has served as the college's vehicle manager. His parents are Milton and Alice Duerksen of Canton, Kan.

Rhonda Ediger, Hoffnungsau Church, Inman, Kan., began a one-year MVS term on Sept. 1 as a home-care worker in Portland, Ore. A former student and library aide at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., she is the daughter of Frank and Helen Ediger of Inman.

Clayton Loewen has been named admissions counselor at Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg, replacing *John Klassen.*

John Longhurst has begun a two-year voluntary service assignment in the MCC Canada office in Winnipeg in the Information Services department. He replaces *Robb Nickel.*

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1984 Mennonite World Conference Tours

Assiniboine Travel Service has arranged for a variety of all-inclusive tours to precede or follow the World Conference Assembly in Strasbourg, France, July 24-30, 1984. Detailed itineraries are available for each tour. The tours all combine educational input from knowledgeable hosts with leisurely touring. (If you wish to join a tour but not attend the Assembly, or if you wish to arrive earlier or stay later for private travel, we would be pleased to make alternative travel arrangements.)

1. **From Rome to Witmarsum —Church History Tour: June 30 - July 21, 1984.** Host: George Epp
2. **Soviet Union Tour: July 1-21, 1984.** Hosts: John Friesen and Abe Dueck
3. **The Church Through the Centuries: July 6-23, 1984.** Host: Waldemar Janzen
4. **Exploring the Middle East: July 9-23, 1984.** Hosts: David Schroeder and Gerald Gerbrandt
5. **CMC Choir Tour to Europe: July 13 - August 9, 1984.** Host: Helmut Harder; Music Director: Bernie Neufeld
6. **Eurail Youth Backpacking Tour:** (Details to be announced in fall.)
7. **Exploring Renaissance and Reformation Centers: July 11 - August 9, 1984.** Hosts: Henry Krahn and Ken Reddig
8. **Austria, Hungary and the Soviet Union: July 29 - August 17, 1984.** Hosts: Al Reimer, John R. Friesen and Roy Vogt (Waiting list only)
9. **Central Europe Tour of Germany and Italy: July 30 - August 14, 1984.** Host: John Bergen
10. **Romantisches Deutschland Post Conference** Host: Elisabeth Peters

Contact: John Schroeder, Ruth Wiebe, Lori Neufeld, Hilda Driedger.

For complete details on these tours, please call:

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At Christmas MCC provides food for poor families in the U.S. $15 sends a *bag of groceries.*

Women of the Mennonite Church of Zaire hold *women's seminars* that include Bible study, nutrition and sewing. Participants then lead seminars in surrounding villages. $15 trains one leader. $175 buys materials for one seminar.

Covered *cisterns* in West Bank hold water from the brief rainy season for irrigation in dry months. $235 builds one cistern.

In Prince Albert, Sask., VSers offer a *program for youth* prone to delinquency. $50 pays for group activities for a month. $15 sponsors a youth camper.

There are few *school supplies* in rural Bolivian classrooms. $15 buys maps, a blackboard or textbooks. $100 equips one classroom.

MCC is sending *canned beef* to drought victims in Zambia. 44¢ ships one pound. $18 sends a 42-pound carton.

MDS is *repairing* 20-30 *flooded homes* for low-income families in Louisiana. Materials to repair one home cost $3,000. Donations of any amount will help a family return home.

In Bangladesh women piece *blankets* for hospitals and orphanages. $5 provides materials for one blanket. This year's goal is 6,000 blankets.

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Fast for Life: an appeal to heart and hands

Mary Sprunger-Froese

On Aug. 6, 11 people from six countries began an open-ended water fast to stop the nuclear arms race. Believing that the arms race threatens human existence and that preparations for a holocaust doom millions to starvation every day, the fasters voluntarily joined the hungry as they asked for a significant step to halt the momentum of the arms race. The "Fast for Life" commenced in Paris and at the sixth Assembly of the World Council of Churches in Vancouver. The fasters (most of them parents, ranging in age from 26 to 58) then traveled to the fasting centers at Oakland, Calif., Bonn and Paris.

In a prepared statement the participants explained why they had chosen to fast: "Through fasting we identify with the millions who will hunger as long as the arms race continues. We will share their pain and by so doing we may finally unlock the doors to our own hearts and to the hearts of our brothers and sisters. Open-ended fasts, because of the life risks involved, have a way of speeding up decision making, breaking stalemates and producing change. If we ever needed such speed, it is certainly now. The children are dying and the thread that holds the Bomb is fraying."

"Open-ended fasts, because of the life risks involved, have a way of speeding up decision making, breaking stalemates and producing change. If we ever needed such speed, it is certainly now. The children are dying and the thread that holds the Bomb is fraying."

The fasters believe that steps toward disarmament and peace will be nearly impossible if first-strike weapons are deployed in Europe as the U.S. plans to do by the end of this year. Thus, a "significant step" would be a decision by the U.S. or by NATO not to deploy Pershing II or Cruise missiles in Europe. Another decision the fasters considered significant would be dismantling of Soviet SS-20 missiles. As an international group, the Fast for Life appealed for a step from any or all countries involved in the arms race.

But the faith of the fasters was not in governments. They hoped to rouse sympathizers to say no to weapons in such persistent and united actions that governments would be compelled to respond accordingly.

As Charles Gray, one of the initiators of the fast, said, "Perhaps, when they are at their best, people are the hands and heart of God." Thus the fasters did not intend to die, but believing that the majority of the world's people want the nuclear arms race stopped, hoped for enough immediate and decisive action to halt its momentum.

Was their faith rewarded? The Union of Evangelical Christians called for a worldwide Christian day of fasting. In Toronto, two people, Brian Burch and Karen Harrison, began an open-ended fast that lasted the duration.

By Aug. 18, there were support fasts in 163 U.S. cities in 31 states, and in over 40 cities in 17 other countries. Vigils were held in over 30 locations.

Sept. 6-9 were the days designated for letters to international leaders, with a goal of 5 million letters. Sept. 14, the 40th day of the fast, was celebrated as "No More Business as Usual Day" in the United States. People were urged to not go to work but to fast, act for peace and gather for public prayer. On the next day, because of the large outpouring of world responses, the fast was broken.

What was the significant step? The fasters believe it was the many actions of common people—those stirred by the lives of the fasters.

The challenge of the fast continues: What are we willing to give for the sake of peace? How can we feed the hungry if our monies and resources are turned into bombs? Is there a place for "foolish" acts of reckless faith, given the edge of destruction on which this world teeters? Could the voluntary giving of one's life, in hope for transforming people's hearts, open up another round of redemption history? Did Jesus do that? Will the fasters' actions continue through the hands and hearts of all who long for peace.

Wanted

Do you know of unbound volumes of *The Mennonite* or of bound volumes that could be used for microfilming and/or microfiche purposes?

We are looking especially for the years 1885-1965.

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Vancouver is also a symbol

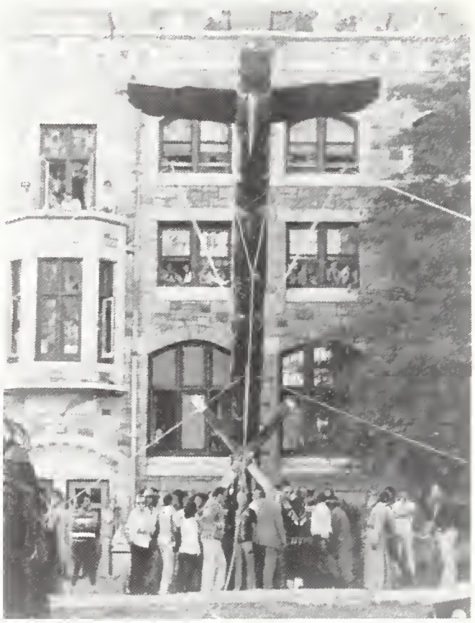
Donovan E. Smucker

Donovan Smucker was a General Conference fraternal delegate to this summer's Sixth Assembly of the World Council of Churches at Vancouver, British Columbia, July 24 - Aug. 10. Smucker has been a professor at Mennonite Biblical Seminary and at Conrad Grebel College. Currently retired, he is serving an interim assignment as pastor of First Mennonite Church at Bluffton, Ohio.

World Council of Churches in Vancouver. It was agony flying west to Vancouver when I wanted to fly east to Bethlehem, where a historic meeting of two conferences was taking place. It was agony flying west when so many attacks had been made on the WCC meeting I was to attend. It was agony trying to grasp what the Mennonite strategy really is in relation to other churches and other Christians. My eyes popped when I read the statistics. There are 698,300 Mennonites worldwide. There are 1.4 billion professed Christians on six continents—giving Mennonites one-twentieth of 1 percent of the total. Obviously, Mennonite unity movements like our world conference and Mennonite Central Committee cover only a tiny portion of Christians.

So I said to myself as I sped toward Vancouver at 600 miles an hour that someone ought to be at the WCC to find out what was going on. That's it. I was a monitor, an observer and listener. Larry Kehler from the Conference of Mennonites in Canada and John Howard Yoder from the Mennonite Church had similar status. John Rempel, my colleague from Conrad Grebel, was there as a journalist for *Mennonite Reporter*. Urbane Peachey and Ross Nigh came as observers for MCC. Palmer Becker, Fred Redekop, Bill Klassen, Harold Koslowsky and many others came for shorter periods of time as visitors. Hundreds of our people watched the proceedings coast to coast on television.

Now for the surprise. There are Mennonites who actually belong to the World Council of Churches and send official delegates. Henk Kossen was the delegate from the Dutch Mennonites; Daniel Geiser represented the United Mennonite Congregations of West Germany. And The Mennonite Church in Zaire (*Eglise du Christ zu Zaire-Communaute Mennonite*) has been a member of its national ECZ since 1973 (40,000 members in 121 congregations). They are also listed as members in the WCC Handbook.



More than 1,000 people attending the July 24-Aug. 10 World Council of Churches sixth assembly at Vancouver watched this ceremony of raising an Indian totem pole. The pole was a gift from Native Canadians. It will eventually stand on the grounds of the WCC headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland.

Urbane Peachey explained my unexpected discovery by pointing out that Mennonite mission and service groups overseas usually join their national council of churches for Christian solidarity because the believers are in a minority. India, Tanzania and Zaire are examples.

By the same token, the masthead of *The Mennonite* says our conference publication is a member of Associated Church Press, Meetinghouse (inter-Mennonite) and the Canadian Church Press. Mennonite Biblical Seminary is a member of the North American Association of Theological Schools. Project Ploughshares at Conrad Grebel College is an interdenominational coalition of Canadian peace witnesses. More amazing was my discovery that the General Conference was a member of the U.S. Federal Council of Churches from 1908 to 1917. During World War II we were a member of the National Council's committee for the defense of conscientious objectors along with the National Service Board for Religious Objectors in Washington.

All of these connections with other churches I call a *de facto* policy of ecumenical strategy. It isn't a neatly stated theological policy. We simply join with other Christians when it seems functional for our needs.

First a fellowship. At the airport I was assigned to a host family, Ed and Jean Strang, Vancouver United Church members. En route to the campus of the University of British Columbia I discovered the major delight and joy of the WCC Assembly—its remarkable array of Christians from all parts of the world. In the car with me was Benjamin Arreat, an Innuit (Eskimo) Anglican minister from Sugluk, P.Q. In that harsh, cold isolated community he is a minister of the gospel who had attended an Anglican training school roughly equivalent to our Swift Current or Elim (Bible institutes in Canada).

Other Christians I met included the following:

- Ellison Pogo of the Solomon Islands and Darlene Keju of the Marshall Islands. While 90 percent of the Pacific Islanders are Christians, they too are crying out like a voice in the wilderness against the bomb tests, the dumping of nuclear wastes and the 7,000 missiles which threaten them.
- Michael Sushil, head of the Baptist churches in Bangladesh. There are 250,000 Christians in that fanatical Muslim country of 90 million.
- Isaac Pretong, Orthodox Christian from Iraq who fled his country in despair after persecution and rejection.
- Matthew Melink, superintendent of the Baptist church in the Ukraine (Soviet Union). Spoke at Peace Mennonite Church in Richmond, B.C. A rugged biblical Christian whose New Testament is always in his hand. Knows Mennonites.
- Choon Young Kim, general secretary of the Methodist church of South Korea. Just before Vancouver he was under house arrest.
- Jim Lawson, pastor of large Methodist church in black area of Los Angeles.

WCC general secretary Philip Potter addresses the Sixth Assembly: ". . . the fellowship of Christian churches has been strengthened by recent media attacks."

Served prison term in World War II for refusal to register. Worked with Martin Luther King, Jr., 15 years.

- Margareta Ingemstam, Swedish Mission Covenant, who knows the difference between a vigorous believers' church and the nearly empty state church of Sweden. Christian pacifist.
- Bishop Paulos Mar Gregorios of the Orthodox Syrian Church of India was the only "high church" official who was a graduate of a Mennonite college. At Goshen he was known as Paul Verghese.
- Emilio Castro, evangelical leader from Uruguay.

At every meal, every coffee break and every recess these genuine Christians were present for conversation and fellowship. The second chapter of Acts and the Great Commission are realities in the 20th century. Vancouver, first of all, was a fellowship.

The assembly is launched. The opening public meeting was at the Coliseum. Upon arrival there I saw the pickets featuring Ian Paisley, the fanatical enemy of Catholics in North Ireland, Carl McIntyre, who picketed the Russian Mennonites at Wichita, and Bob Jones, president of the right-wing university which immodestly bears his name. The local press seemed more interested in this trio than in the main session in the Coliseum.

About 15,000 people heard the opening statement from Lois Wilson of Canada: "We are here together today because we share a common faith confessing Jesus Christ as God and Savior according to the Scriptures." The WCC is trinitarian and conservative in theology. This was expressed in Scripture from creation through Christ's crucifixion and resurrection to the promise of the Holy City, using a 750-voice choir with a brass and percussion ensemble, powerful hymns and in the major address by Jean Vanier, who challenged us to live out our belief in Jesus according to the Scriptures: "Jesus is calling us to make community with the littlest, the weakest and the lost of the world."

Unity. Is there growing unity? The presence of people in diversity suggests that. More specifically, so did the reports on baptism (don't baptize indiscriminately, one parent must be a Christian), ministry (ministers are accountable to congregations and are ordained for special functions) and the Lord's Supper (the Supper has ethical implications).

There are two goals in the area of unity: (1) Bring confessional families together as we are doing in the Mennonite World Conference and the Reformed Churches are doing in their Reformed World Alliance. (2) Work with other Christians in the loose federation of councils and assemblies where we seek consensus and then discover questions which are still being debated. The official statements constitute advice and counsel—not legislation.

Today's world. Peace and justice must stay together. The rage, anger, alienation and precarious existence of Third World people make them wary of a total focus on the nuclear apocalypse when they are still struggling with survival. The Vancouver assembly was impressive at both levels: Dramatic peace speeches by Coretta Scott King, Helen Caldicott, Allan Boesak and Philip Potter resonated with the vast majority of the delegates. The Ploughshares programs had a remarkable response every day. But it is economically bleak and politically precarious in the less developed countries. We can continue emergency help, but we must look at long-range answers. Since most Christians are not pacifists, the use of violence is always tempting in closed, sick, corrupt and oppressive societies. I couldn't find any evidence that the Communist answer is attractive and alluring to the Christian communities forced to confront that answer. The KGB is headquartered in Moscow, not Geneva.

Our missionary faith. Christianity is a great missionary faith which has taken root throughout the inhabited world. Missions and MCC help us recognize this rich mosaic of Christian vitality. We are voting members of many ecumencial bodies. Almost always we are present to observe that which we do not join. Others emerge to consign the whole ecumenical movement to the work of Satan. Vancouver and Bethlehem are symbols of our joint task in the years ahead: unity within our confessional family and conditional cooperation outside of the family but within the global household of faith.

What I learned in 10 minutes

Julio E. Duenas

One of our first groups in New York started in a barber shop which the owner loaned to us. We outgrew this space very quickly.

I was born in January 1940 in Girardot, Colombia. My infancy was miserable. Orphaned at 1½ years of age, I never had the privilege of getting to know my mother. My mother's death caused my father great distress and depression.

It left my father with three small sons in moral, spiritual and economic poverty. The situation caused him to lose his reasoning on a temporary basis, and though he was treated medically, he remained emotionally damaged for about three years. My father died in 1968.

At age seven I abandoned my humble home. I recall mostly the cruelty with which we were treated. Since then I've always depended on the spirit of survival. My infancy and my adolescence had been traumatic and badly oriented, without education and filled with complexity. I went to school for 1½ years.

In 1961, at age 21, I recognized my confusion and understood that I wasn't prepared for the future. I always asked myself how I could establish a home, a career and an education.

I joined the Colombian Marines. After 18 months of military service I returned to civilian life. I had been taught to kill in defense of the rights and sovereignty of Colombian citizens. This experience realistically left nothing that could inspire me toward the success I was seeking.

Only one experience has left a great and enduring satisfaction in my life. It was when I discovered that when you face death you also encounter life. It was in that that I heard of the love of God. It seems strange that what one man (I'm not sure who) spoke in 10 minutes left a more lasting satisfaction than the 18 months of anguish and crying I would prefer to forget. Since then a new period has begun in my life. To meet Christ was the path to peace, the peace that Christ promised to people of good will (John 14:27; Luke 2:14). From then until now I have been working for the Lord, and my work has been to plant.

Julio E. Duenas says something to the General Conference triennial sessions at Bethlehem, where their church was one of 26 congregations received into membership.

IGLESIA CRISTIANA MENONITA
CUERPO DE CRISTO
N. Y.
CRISTO ES EL MOTIVO DE MI VIDA

During this phase of maturing I've traveled through many areas and visited groups encountering controversy. On some occasions this made me doubt the faith of promised hope. But within me lies a superior strength that has sustained me on this assigned mission, "Go through all the world and preach the gospel, making disciples and teaching them to guard those things." I've continued to understand the calling and great responsibility this commission demands.

I took correspondence courses and involved myself in night courses for Bible study. In God's plan for people, he knew what to do with me.

On June 30, 1968, I arrived for the first time in the United States. I considered myself a Christopher Columbus at age 28. My first thought was, Here I am, Lord, what do I do? The days and months went by. I understood I needed to learn the new lessons that Christ was teaching me. I have continued to learn each day.

On five occasions in the past 14 years I've gone back to Colombia. I was able to bring my family after we had been separated for two years. Members of my family are my wife, Magdalena, my daughter Yanica and my son Alexander.

In 1972 we began planting churches. One group formed in a barber shop, which the owner loaned to us. After six months we rented a 12- by 18-foot space. By the end of the year the group (Sunday school) had grown to 150 people. The group then divided to form a new congregation.

Once we raised $5,000. Together with another group we purchased a building for $50,000. Problems came up and within months we were left with nothing. Our morale was too low to pray; some decided to stay home, others went to different churches and others started to establish a new group.

We gathered in a church with people who didn't understand our language and vice versa. It was a new lesson for my wife and me that lasted one year. The Holy Spirit comforted us, taught us and guided us, since we didn't understand their language. Nevertheless, we knew that God understood our needs and that he interceded for us. In our language we expressed our feelings.

On Dec. 31, 1978, in a prayer to leave the year 1978 and enter 1979, I profoundly prayed that God use me in a new way and that I was ready. My wife asked, "Start new? And where are we to start?" I told her, "In our apartment," and on Jan. 29, 1979, we had our first meeting and have continued until today. We still don't have a temple in which to undertake our programs and to carry on a more effective work in the community, but this has not discouraged us, for we hope to reach our objective soon.

The name of our group is Mennonite Christian Church of the Body of Christ. For two years we have carried the Mennonite name, thanks to various people, one of which is Anthony Arevalo, pastor, with whom we shared our missionary work in Colombia. Also Hector Valencia has visited us, encouraged us and reviewed our plans, and Ernst Harder has supported us. The New York Council, under Pastor Mateo, has encouraged us. Yet there still exist voids in my life as leader and pastor.

MEDITATION

Pulpit a special symbol

For members of Maplewood Church, Fort Wayne, Ind., the General Conference symbol of the cross and orb is more than a drawing on paper. It is a pulpit carved from solid red oak and a reminder of the foundation of their faith in Jesus Christ.

In February 1973, Otto Warkentin was appointed a "one-person committee" to design the chancel furniture for the sanctuary being built. Having been employed by a firm which makes chancel furniture and pews, Otto was knowledgeable in this area. (Maplewood also made an agreement with that firm to purchase the wooden benches for the sanctuary under construction. Also, Otto could use their facilities to make the pulpit, communion table, guest book lecturn and offering plates.)

The building and decoration committee gave Otto some criteria for the chancel furniture. The designs were to be functional, durable, pleasing to the eye in form, provide meaning and be feasible to build.

It took months for Otto to formulate ideas. To begin the creative process of thinking on a pulpit design, Otto took a stack of *The Mennonite* magazines on vacation. He leafed through them, searching for pictures of symbols representing the Mennonite faith. Spotting the General Conference symbol, Otto viewed the cross through the world on a foundation as a potential pulpit.

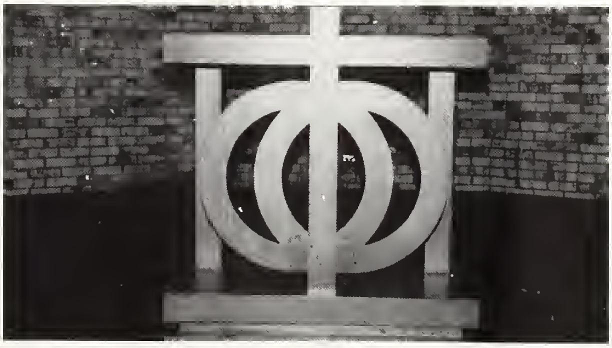
The symbol could have been placed on the front of a box-style pulpit. However, the design itself became functional. Otto drew plans and presented them to the committee.

The committee discussed the openness of the symbol as a pulpit. They felt the open space could convey a message that we, the priesthood of believers, have nothing to hide when God's Word is spoken. A microphone could fit snugly behind the top of the cross. The arms of the cross could serve as a place for people to lay notes. The committee liked the meaning of the symbol and approved its design for the pulpit.

Historically the cross and orb design, presented for adoption at the 1965 triennial GC session, is flexible in meaning. It signifies the sovereignty of Christ in the world and in life to come. The symbol suggests the inseparable relationship between faith (the cross) and life (the world) by the cross through the center of the world. The line below the cross suggests the concept of a foundation based on 1 Corinthians 13:11, ". . . other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (KJV).

To Otto, the pulpit and other furniture is all the thanks he needs for his labor of love to Christ. "It rewards me each time I look at it," says Otto.

Donna Lehman



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October 31, 1517—466 years ago—Martin Luther's hammer blows, as he nailed his 95 theses on the Castle Church door in Wittenburg, sounded the inaugural of the Reformation. But it was never his hope to splinter the church. He dreamed of renewal from within.

Many people celebrate the Reformation as a one-for-all event—in some cases treated like a milestone not unlike a biblical special event such as the Exodus.

Reformation needs to be ongoing if it is to be true to its origin. There is much room for renewal in today's churches. Our prayer is that this issue might contibute to church growth from within without further splinter.

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EdiTORiAL

The charter for Christian humanism

Today if you want to put down a religious voice, call the person "humanist" and the thoughts "humanism." A la McCarthy or the KKK, some of the saints pounce on almost anybody who uses other than the dulcet tones of evangelical orthodoxy. Label the *other* person humanist and walk away with a smug self-awarded medal for Spirit valor.

Renaissance to Reformation. Church history texts speak of a movement from Renaissance to Reformation. The 14th-century shift from medieval times accented the arts, literature and modern science. Vigorous artistic and intellectual pursuit marked this renaissance period. Some say the height of the Renaissance was also the apex of humanism.

This caused serious problems in the church. It held to a status quo and excommunicated a visionary like Copernicus (d. 1543) who insisted that the earth was not the center of the universe.

Such revolutionary humanism forced a Reformation. Revival of studying Greek and Hebrew brought Luther and Calvin into direct encounter with the Bible. While some scholars pursued scriptural studies to undergird a faltering church, Luther and Calvin became Bible expositors in a profoundly fresh sense.

The unexamined life. The Renaissance was not the first age to free human potential. Socrates (d. 399 B.C.) gave his life in a quest for understanding. His maxim, "The unexamined life is not worth living," is admired by all humanists and was admired by Reformation theologians.

Socrates spoke to two dangers. Any time humanism is deaf to the fact we are also spiritual beings, it becomes an idolatrous dead end. Such exercise is practiced by far too many scholars. They pursue their disciplines as though there is only one. Their answers betray questions they dare not ask. Such intellectual pursuit is pompous naivete of the worst kind. Paraded as academic excellence, it becomes human bankruptcy.

Any scholarship worthy of the label must desire the critique of other disciplines. While we Christians believe theology is the highest branch of knowledge, it is but one branch. It deserves attention by all branches, and theologians must affirm other branches.

The second danger is reflected by the Reformation. When the church's encrusted codes were examined, this was violently resisted. After all, they were products of 1,500 years being the body of Christ, born in the first-century crucible of Roman rule challenged by a cross and an empty tomb with the exploding witness of true believers. How dare anyone challenge the church?

But from Wittenberg the renewal encompassed the globe with shock waves never fully understood and integrated into the body of Christ even today.

Some believe the 16th-century Reformation is the ultimate. We now want to *recover* its visions.

Is it because—like the entrenched medieval church—we are afraid to have our faith examined? What is it that scares Christians when other Christians pose human questions to our faith?

From Reformation to Christian humanism. When Christians fail to learn from examination, "the children of this world are wiser . . . than the children of light" (Luke 16:8). The heart of Reformation is the cross followed by an empty tomb. Paul affirms this truth in Philippians 2 and urges us, "Finally . . . whatever is true . . . honorable . . . just . . . pure . . . lovely . . . gracious . . . excellent . . . worthy of praise, *think about these things*" (4:8).

Here is the charter for *Christian* humanism. We must together engage in creatively critical study and living. We do not fear human tools when applied to Word and world, to our faith and our life.

It becomes our assurance that the Reformation is not a 16th-century event but an ongoing dynamic of being the body of Christ ("living stones" as was so eloquently expressed at Bethlehem '83). *Bernie Wiebe*

THE MENNONITE

OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST

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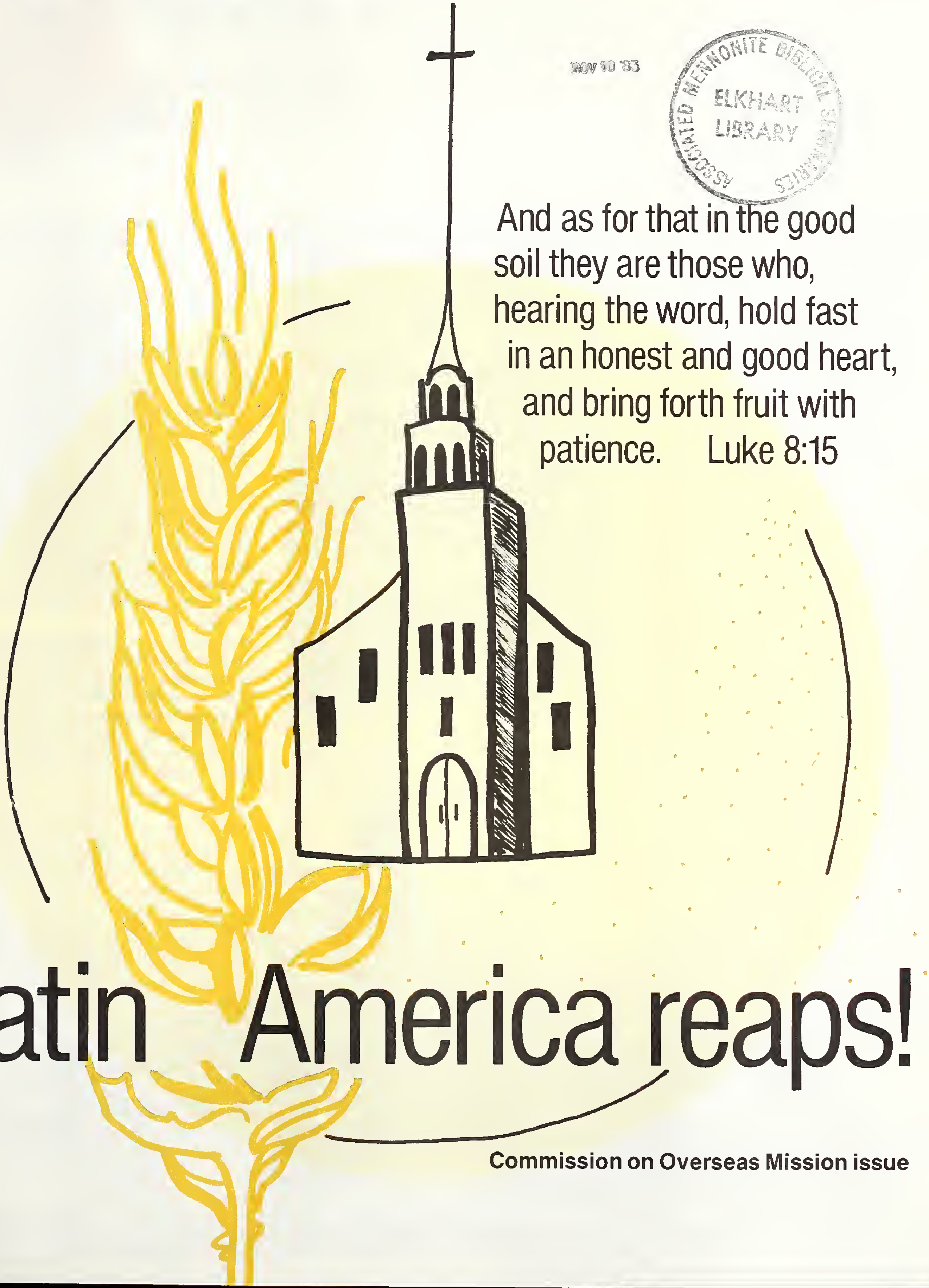

> And as for that in the good
> soil they are those who,
> hearing the word, hold fast
> in an honest and good heart,
> and bring forth fruit with
> patience. Luke 8:15

Latin America reaps!

Commission on Overseas Mission issue

Bogotá
Cachipay

Gerald Stucky

There are many articles about evangelism and church planting written today that inspire and amaze us because of their witness to great success and excellent strategy. Some of us have looked over the fence at our neighbor's field of labor, at the crop, at the harvest, and have perhaps felt some envy, inadequacy and insignificance by comparison. We feel ourselves to be ordinary people, often ineffective and lacking in power and grace. What can God do with such as us?

But God has often taken the weak of humanity and accomplished his purpose, that the glory might be his and his alone, and he is building his church, against which the gates of hell shall not prevail.

In Colombia he is building his church in many ways and is working through many of his children. Some have prepared the soil, some have sown, some have been able to reap, but it has been God who has given the increase. To him be the glory.

Beginnings in Cachipay. In 1947 a few Mennonite missionaries were sent to the village of Cachipay to start a home and school for children whose parents had leprosy and for other children whose parents were poor or persecuted for being evangelical. Is that the way to do evangelism and church planting? Would that bring any results for God's glory? Year after year the ground was prepared, worked and the seed carefully sown. Other missionaries cultivated the country area, sowing the seed. Some fell on rocky ground, for there was much anti-Protestant feeling; some fell on the pathway, and the enemy stomped on it. But some fell on good ground and germinated.

In God's time it grew into congregations of believers in Cachipay, Anolaima and La Mesa. Much sowing was also done in La Esperanza, La Estrella, in Tocarema and elsewhere, but no congregations resulted. Although the seed sprouted and began to grow rapidly, in time it withered, just as Jesus had pre-

The Bogota Central Mennonite Church

Colombia Mennonites evangelize and serve

dicted. Perhaps the ground was too shallow.

And what happened to the children in Cachipay? They grew up, of course. They went to the city, studied, struggled, were disoriented, married, got jobs, and some graduated from the university. Some became teachers, others secretaries, lawyers, preachers, nurses, mothers, bankers, administrators and day laborers. Some abandoned Colombia and went to the United States.

On to Bogota. The missionaries in the country were awakened by God's Spirit. They must not spend all of their time in the rural area; they must go where the children went, where the multitudes of people live. If they wanted to fish, they needed to go where the fish were; so off they went to the city of Bogota.

The young people from Cachipay were found, reorientated, inspired, and in time formed the Berna Mennonite Church and later the Chapinero/Teusaquillo congregations in Bogota. These two churches now minister to some 500 people. To God be the glory.

The young people grew older and were joined by many other capable believers and leaders. ("God added to their number those who were being saved.") New congregations were formed in Ibague, Girardot, Facatativa and in other places.

And beyond. A humble lay minister from Puerto Rico visited and was used by God's Spirit to bring crowds together to hear the gospel and to receive healing of body and soul in Madrid near Bogota. Another new congregation was formed there. The pastor there now also preaches and ministers with surprising results to the soldiers in the nearby military base.

God has by his Spirit called and prepared many believers in the church in Colombia. Missionaries have come and gone and the leadership is now in the hands of the national Christians. God has given them many gifts and these are being used to further plant his church. A few years ago (1980) the Colombian Mennonite Church Conference decided that the number one priority should be that of evangelism and church planting—that seven new churches should be planted in five years. The vision was clear; carrying out the priority has been more difficult.

José Cante plays guitar at the Girardot Mennonite Church, where he formerly served as pastor.

The church serves. Sometimes the impression is given that the church is planted only when new congregations are formed. But Jesus indicated that the Christians—along with their evangelism—were to be light, salt and yeast in this world. The church is to be in the world, though not of the world. In response to this, and with a new consciousness of what it means to be Anabaptist Christians, the church has sought to minister to and *be* the church in society in definite ways. The home for the aged is ministering and caring for nearly 30 needy older people. A child day-care center was begun by the Berna Church. MENCOLDES (MCC-MEDA) is the church's effort to help many who are struggling economically and recently has enthusiastically sent four groups of workers to Popayan's earthquake victims to help in cleaning up debris and in constructing small houses.

Three effective bookstores are providing Christian literature and supplies to many people. The audiovisual center is reaching thousands with Christian films. A credit cooperative is helping people with financial problems. Two rural primary schools are providing Christian education to 350 children. The Retreat Center in Cachipay has provided a place for spiritual meditation and renewal for thousands. The Seminary by Extension is helping lay people to study the Word of God. The church is trying to define its position in a time of revolution in Central and South America. Can we be the church of Christ and not succumb to international pressures and local politics but be identified with the suffering of the multitudes?

Though dark clouds of revolution are being seen, there is the silver lining in the conviction that Christ is with us always, even to the end of the world, and that he is coming back and will complete his kingdom in due time. In the meantime God is calling out a people to be his representatives. The church is being planted, is growing and will be salt, light and yeast in this generation. The church in Colombia seeks God's guidance and your prayers. •

Robert J. Suderman

Caudillos and servant leadership

In my seminary days, students and constituency often talked about an ivory tower—coming down from an ivory tower or building an ivory tower. Ivory tower referred to the intellectual-academic gap and the reality gap that existed between the theological-leadership enterprise and the church experience and practice. For some, this gap led to a rejection of the theological enterprise, while for others it led to a rejection of the church practice.

In the seminary at Cochabamba it is difficult to build an ivory tower. All students spend three to four days a week actually involved in some aspect of church work, and four to eight months a year in full-time supervised church work. One student conducted three funerals in the first four days of his practical work assignment. Another student, after having heard the pleas of a frantic mother for her sick child, saw the child die in his arms during his pastoral prayer.

The small flock of another student pastor was actively persecuted by the larger community because it was suspected their evangelical presence was at fault for the intense drought the community was experiencing. The active practical experiences of the students are not left at the seminary door. The reality of their context enters the classroom with them, and the professor is always confronted with the immediate pastoral implications of what is being taught.

Church leadership training is like hermeneutics. It must take seriously the social-historical context out of which it arises. A hermeneutic which does not take seriously the historical context and the present reality is not a good hermeneutic. In the same way, all leadership training must speak to the reality of a given context or it is not leadership training. One of my challenges in this context is the knowledge that what I teach in the classroom today, somebody will try to teach and implement tomorrow.

We could take the Jesus of Revelation as being the proper posture for church leadership training. His feet are firmly planted among the seven churches while his head is high enough to give a

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A gathering of the La Cruceña, Bolivia, Mennonite Church in August

heavenly perspective to the realities faced by the churches (Revelation 1:12f).

Contextual issues that need consideration here in Latin America (I speak from Bolivia) are several.

1. **Poverty** is an ever-present factor. Most books in Bolivia are imported. To buy one commentary for one course costs the student about 40-70 percent of a monthly income. Just imagine that in your own context. A student needs 10-15 books per year. Most other educational materials are then of course out of the question. Attending a short course is generally not possible because of the need to pay transportation, registration, food, etc. It is virtually impossible to build a library unless it is done with money from the outside. Leaving your home community to get a high school, college or seminary education is economically prohibitive for the majority.

Lack of environment for study plays a large role in the difficulty of leadership training—no privacy in the home, no lighting for evening work, malnutrition which dulls the desires and the capacity for learning.

An inadequate public education system and a high percentage of illiteracy, especially in the rural areas, must be taken seriously in all leadership training efforts.

Also it must be remembered that deeply imbedded institutional poverty rides in the company of other henchmen such as oppression, injustice, dependency and international intrigue of all sorts. All this has left a fatalistic attitude toward life and toward any hope of possible improvement. The outside missions have all too often fallen into the trap of promising the sky and delivering only more rain clouds. This has been interpreted as proof of the unchangeable slavery conditions and has led to an even deeper despair.

2. **Dominant leadership models.** A contemporary leadership training model must take seriously the dominant models which have existed and still exist in the experience of the people. We could look at these models through three spheres of influence.

In the religious sphere, most of Latin America is still under Constantinian dominance. The leadership model has been the hierarchical one of the Catholic church, which is quickly and easily transferred into family leadership structure, evangelical church structure and community organizations.

In the political and military spheres, Bolivians have experienced the *caudillo* model. The caudillo is a strong man—a person who is decisive and has a certain amount of charisma. This person is able to give orders to dominate those around him and to gain some degree of respect from those below him. This model goes as far back as the ancient Inca; was brutalized, adjusted but basically maintained in the Spanish conquistador period; was confirmed again in the War of Independence in Simon Bolivar; and since then many military dictators have seized power and maintained their dominance, thanks to the acceptance of this model.

In the economic sphere, the leadership model has largely been one of the patron—the person who can dominate and control because of his economic status. Again, the history of the patron is long and reaches back to the consquistadores, to the European mining kings that came to take over the exploitation process, to the national giants who struck it rich, from Simon Patino, the great tin baron of Bolivia, to the U.S. multinational bosses today.

It may also be said that the evangelical mission process has tended toward a benevolent patron system—a process in which the economic power, dominance and decision making has been handled by the missionaries or their agencies while the nationals accept and utilize what they can of this benevolence.

This convergence of the hierarchical strong man leadership models in the religious, economic and political-military spheres of life have left a deep scar on the modern lay leadership mentality. Virtually all organizations follow to some degree this caudillo-patron-bishop leadership pattern.

3. **Contemporary efforts.** There have been varied efforts within the Latin context to try to overcome some of the obstacles in leadership development mentioned above.

The work and thought of Paulo Freire. Although it is not always easy to document, the influence of Freire is perhaps one of the leading agents of change in a wide variety of areas, from literacy programs to top level seminary programs. In his *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* he builds a strong case for what he calls the conscientization of the poor. Only when victims of injustice are able to recognize themselves as victims of injustice is it possible for them to enter the historical process as responsible subjects. They are enrolled "in the search for self-affirmation." His influence in the educational process challenges the fatalistic outlook; it radicalizes the possibility of critical analysis by the person and defies the blind acceptance of the domi-

Dedication service held when the new church was started at Las Gawas in Bolivia

nant leadership models we have discussed.

Theological Education by Extension. This movement, begun in 1963 in Guatemala, challenges the idea of a residential training center and encourages the concept of a decentralized leadership training system which goes where the people are instead of bringing the people to where the resources are. It represents an evangelical reawakening to the plurality of ministries in the church and the universality of ministries in the church. It also emphasizes, as Freire has done, the need to analyze the social reality of the student, to conscientize the student about one's environment and to tie the teaching-learning process directly to the local context of the student. Ross Kinsler, the father of the movement, stated in a paper here in Cochabamba that "theological education cannot be limited simply to the preparation of pastors, nor can it be considered a minor vocation of the laity. Rather it must challenge the totality of the human and spiritual resources of the church in order to confront the tragic needs which surround us and in order to fight against every form of evil, working for a society which is more just and more human, and to give our life for the salvation of many." The impact of this movement can be felt and seen in virtually every seminary in the Latin American context.

Comunidades de base (base Christian communities). This is a lay movement largely within the Catholic sphere. Again the influence of Freire is evident. These groups consist of six to 15 people who gather regularly to read and study the Bible, to analyze their own context and to discuss the best way in which to apply the revolutionary truths of the Bible to their situation. This process of conscientization has had incredible growth, and these comunidades now exist in virtually every Latin nation. It is estimated that in Brazil alone there are over 40,000 of these groups (1977). The emphasis is on a lay awakening to the gospel, the encouragement of the ministries of each one and the application to their own context of the things that are learned and discussed. In many instances the local priest participates in the group, but simply as another person and not as the leader or authority.

Liberation theology has also offered a severe critique of the imported leadership models. It rejects the academic, ivory tower setting of European-U.S.-Canadian theological activity and insists that true theologizing does not move from theory to practice, from abstract to concrete, from articulation to application, but that true theology has its origin in the reality-in-the-praxis and from this involvement moves toward an understanding and articulation of biblical truth for this particular reality.

Perhaps the resume of Jose Miquez Bonino, in a paper entitled "Basic Characteristics of Ministerial Preparation in a Theological Institute" best exemplifies some of the new directions and emphases in the four movements mentioned.

Bonino says that theological leadership training has always operated in a dialectical tension. He identifies seven of these basic tensions as follows: (1) the universal—contextual tension, (2) the deductive—inductive tension, (3) theology oriented to the past—theology oriented to the future, (4) the theoretical—practical tension, (5) the learning of content—learning how to think tension, (6) the special ministries—lay ministries tension, (7) the denominational—ecumenical tension.

Although Bonino does not say so in so many words, the implication is evident. The inherited, imported and dominant leadership training models have always emphasized more the first part of this dialectic. From what we have seen, it also seems evident that the newer emerging models are moving in the opposite direction.

Servant leadership. When Jesus says in Mark 10:42, "You know that those who are supposed to rule the gentiles lord it over them, and their great men exercise authority over them," he is speaking of the worldly leadership models. This statement is not at all difficult for Latins to understand, because it represents for them a description of their own experience. The second part of Jesus' teaching is more difficult to apply in this context. "But it shall not be so among you, but whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be the slave of all. For the Son of Man also came not to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

How to apply and develop the concept of a leader as a slave or a slave as a leader in a context where the public community is demanding someone to exercise authority over them is still far from clear. But the winds of change are blowing in Latin America, and there are many exciting signs of a new and more authentic expression of a contextualized gospel. It is evident that this generation of the U.S. and Canadian Christian community will need to stand back, assess the lessons coming out of the Latin experience and learn from the struggle of its Latin brothers and sisters. •

Later, Lord . . .

Evelyn Minshull

"Follow me, and I will make
you fishers of men" (Matthew 4:19).

Your whisper pervaded
my sunlit youth —
"Follow me . . ."
a lyrical music
(muted woodwinds and strings)
gently sweet,
not insisting,
and I
(though resisting)
felt my own inner song
swell and merge
with restricted response . . .
"Yes, I will, Lord!
I will!
Only later . . ."
for there were other musics,
calling —
an orchestra of crickets,
meadow-hid;
whirrings of wings
like stained glass cobwebs
and pizzicato pebbles,
plumbing crystal,
spring-fed
pools.

. . . and the months . . . melted . . .
by moments. . . .

Your whisper invaded
my newlywed years —
"Follow me . . ."
a breeze,
softly-rhythmed
(lace-blossomed, song-laden)
coolly sweet,
not persisting,
and I
(still resisting *immediate* "yes")
felt my own heightened love
swell and merge
in response . . .
"Yes, I will!
Oh, I will!
Only later . . ."
for there were other breezes

blowing —
a melody of freshets,
fragrance-borne;
showers of petals,
dew-enfreshened,
and the whirlwind ecstasy
of children's voices,
children's hands
in mine.

. . . then the years swept by
in torrents. . . .

And now, through the rustle
and rattle and clamor
of energies scattered
and channeled in mazes
I still catch Your whisper
in sweet intonations —
a music,
a fragrance,
a kind invitation . . .

But I follow in fragments,
I praise You in patches,
I serve You in segments
and shrink from that promise
I once made so glibly.

Guilt-ridden,
I ask You,
"Why is it You want me?
I —
inconsistent,
as yet barely grazing
that firmest commitment,
that deepest devotion,
You softly solicit. . . ?"

When,
from agonized heart need
my whisper cries
(from soul-night's dark searching)
strident, harsh
with insisting,
invading Your Peace —
"Please, Lord, come be with me . . .
Please, Lord, guide me
through this . . ."
Why
shouldn't You answer me . . .
turning . . .
"Yes!
Yes, I will —
but later . . ."

But Your whisper still seeks me . . .

The wide road

Paul Mares

My road is a wide one.
A four-lane highway.
Complete with desolate stretches
of open country
and
brings me through bustling cities.
Every once in a while,
I stop at a rest area.
I comtemplate my road behind
and
see my road ahead.
My road is a wide one
and is always narrow on the horizon.

God came to me through Maria

Marlene Daku

My problem was to learn the Portuguese language. My question was whether God really cared and would help me.

We spent 10 months in language school learning the basic grammar when we first came to Brazil. During the early adjusting stage of being thrown into a completely Portuguese world, we received an unexpected visitor—one who meant to stay for only a few days but who ended up staying for a month. We were happy to help. However, with this sudden extra responsibility, I became immersed in household duties with little extra time to get acquainted with my neighbors and to begin learning the language. Although the guest was Brazilian and I could have learned from him, it didn't work out that way. It seemed natural that he and Ron (my husband) should run around town tending to business and church matters while I kept the meals on the table and the laundry clean. Even with a maid, a wife and mother has a hundred and one things to do.

As the days crept by and the routine didn't change, my spirit sank lower and lower. At the end of the day I would wonder what new word I had learned. I silently pleaded for help. My need was for someone to befriend me, to take an interest in my learning the language. Days passed. Desperation set in. I was trying to keep my head above water but became so discouraged that I just mentally gave up on ever learning the language. With a final cry to the Lord I stopped pleading and left it to him.

That's when the miracle began. (I am slowly learning that this is usually the case.)

One noon hour I received a telephone call. A woman spoke to me in Portuguese. But after getting little response from me she said, "Maybe I should try my English." I happily agreed. She explained that she had been to Philip's school—the one we had just happened to send him to—and asked the counselor if there were any foreigners in that school. She got our name and number and decided to call and see if we needed help in any area. She and her family had just returned from the United States after living there for 3½ years. She explained she had been floundering with the language for months, until one day someone saw her need and began to help.

Adjusting to a new culture is often a formidable challenge for missionaries and their children.

They became fast friends, and that woman came to her home twice a week to help with the language and the culture. Now that she was back in Brazil, she wanted to return the favor to someone else who had a need in this area. Would I happen to have one? (I barely caught the receiver before it hit the floor.)

Maria and I also became good friends. She faithfully came twice a week, and sometimes we went on outings to acquaint me with different products and foods in supermarkets or with stores and the best prices on clothes or shoes, or we'd just go for a drive and have coffee. She phoned me often, because that is one of the hardest things to do when learning a new language. She helped us locate doctors and schools for the children. When Ron and I took turns having hepatitis, her husband handled our bills and Maria took us to the doctor. She helped in every practical way she could think of—a beautiful gift to me. I was overwhelmed with gratitude to the Lord for providing exactly what I needed to spark some hope inside me again.

Maria is a spiritist—a wonderful, intelligent person, concerned about the needs of the poor and the injustice she sees. I prayed the Lord would reveal his love for her through our family and friendship. I believe our lives have left some impact on her family. They were amazed that we would move from our first house to a different one—smaller and simpler—way across the city. She understood it was because we wanted to live near the people we were working with in trying to begin a new church. We talked about God from time to time. I pray that the seeds sown will be carefully watered and cared for so that a new plant can be born.

I don't see her much anymore. For three or four months we were together a lot. Then she began to study mornings and evenings and there was little time left apart from her homework and family. Since we've moved, we don't have a phone, so even this form of communication is cut off. But I still believe that God, in exactly the right time, brought her into my life. In the midst of my problem I felt he was far away, and God used her to reveal himself to me once again. There's got to be something in this for her too.

Marlene Daku, C.P. 199, 74000 Goiania, Goias, Brazil, is a COM missionary working with her husband, Ron, to begin a Mennonite church in the suburb of Itatiaia in Goiania.

We need four awarenesses

Steve Fath

Sometimes I catch myself wondering if I really understand what Jesus meant when he told his first disciples, "Seek first his kingdom and his righteousness (or justice, his style of life)" (Matthew 6:33). He had just finished instructing them not to worry about what they were to eat or wear because the Father takes care of all those needs. If I am to be his disciple, then these words apply to me also, although quite frankly I find it too easy to preoccupy myself with those details and all too quickly lose sight of the kingdom.

As I observe the Bolivian panorama around me, I ask myself what it means to seek first his kingdom here. What is the best way to effectively communicate the powerful love of a very real Father to a world that seems to be mostly indifferent and quite skeptical?

God's solution was to make a personal visit. The Creator of the universe took his greatest risk when he broke into the course of human history to take on our nature—what we call the incarnation.

Our solution must be no different from God's. We are called to flesh out the life of Christ and his kingdom in an incarnational witness. Because his grace and mercy have been extended to us, we become participants in this incarnational process. Not only are we co-creators with God the Father, we are also co-redeemers.

Even though I will never be fully Bolivian, neither will I return to the land of my birth with values untouched and untempered by the struggle of sister and brother Bolivians. I believe that my presence here—one more light shining in all the darkness—can make a difference in God's eternal plan. What then is to be the nature of that witness? What can be drawn from the way Jesus ministered while he was on earth? Em Griffin has observed four awarenesses to keep before us.

1. Go where the people are. To be like Jesus, we have to mingle with the masses—talking, touching, eating, playing. It is a long-term process of building friendships. Fruitbearing plants are the result of good seed, fertile soil and careful nurture. The more people get to know me, the more they can get to know Jesus Christ. That can be a rather scary thought, but the truth is that Christ has incarnated himself in believers and makes his appeal through us.

2. Be vulnerable and transparent. Jesus let himself be known by others. The warts and fatigue were just as visible as his power and love. This kind of vulnerability is persuasive, much more so than the slicked-down, glossed-over superstardom we see all around us. Incarnational witness is the suffering servant example of Jesus involving ourselves in the lives of others and taking the risk of becoming hurt, wounded or even destroyed in the process. Dialogue is risky because we open ourselves to misunderstanding, rejection and resentment. However, our openness serves to authenticate our message.

Steve Fath engaged with Bible teaching in Santa Cruz

3. Our message is Jesus Christ. The only story the early church offered was Jesus Christ, his parables, miracles, encounters with people, teachings, death and resurrection. It's a powerful message—that we can enter into a direct and personal relationship with Christ and the kingdom reality. An incarnational witness will necessarily be a long-term commitment. It takes time for new thoughts about God to filter through our being. It doesn't occur in one setting nor is it a one-shot process. Changing an image of God takes time especially in a cross-cultural setting. Lasting results are not forthcoming when we invite others to give their lives to Christ and his kingdom if their understanding is faulty. Our whole lives and thought processes have to be reoriented by this message.

4. Tenderness. People will often pay slight attention to what we say and focus in more on the actions and signals that accompany our words. A smile, a light touch on the arm, a soft tone in our voice, being drawn to others not as mere statistics but as warm, living, breathing human beings. Instant intimacy is a myth. Genuine friendships take time. If we sincerely care about people in a lost world, we will go out to them and greet them with tenderness.

Co-redeemers with Christ, letting others see Jesus through us—the task is not easy. But he promised to be with us to the farthest places of the earth.

Steve Fath, Casilla 3086, Santa Cruz, Bolivia, MC missionary, works in church development and leadership training in Santa Cruz together with MCC and COM personnel.

Western District Conference learns about conflict

Hillsboro, Kan.—"Conflict: Arena of God's Voice" was the theme of the Western District Conference annual sessions Oct. 21-23 here. But the conference did more talking about conflict than engaging in it.

The conflicts are there in any diverse group; the question is whether we deal with the conflict or run away from it, said Ron Kraybill, director of Mennonite Conciliation Service and author of *Repairing the Breach*. Kraybill led a workshop on conflict management in six segments during the three-day conference, meeting on the Tabor College campus.

Kraybill not only talked about how to manage conflict but staged some role plays on how to work at conflict constructively, using some of the live conflicts within the Western District. For example, to illustrate the value of being able to state the other's point of view to his or her satisfaction, Kraybill called to the stage two people with opposing views on whether women should be ordained. Kraybill then coached them on stating the other's position fairly.

The question of the ordination of women surfaced only briefly on the conference floor, when Alvin Kleinsasser of the Emmaus Mennonite Church, Whitewater, Kan., expressed his objections to the ordination of women and of divorced or remarried people. Such ordinations were seen as possible in a ministerial-congregational ethics statement brought to the conference by the district's ministerial committee. The ordination issue was not debated further in the discussion from the floor, although some discussions continued privately.

The ethics statement was the major resolution to come before the delegates. The statement covers a wide range of topics—from whether a minister should accept honoraria for weddings and funerals, to the role of a former pastor of a congregation, to relationships among the minister, the congregation and the conference.

Most of the delegates had not seen the statement before the conference. So instead of adopting it, they agreed to send the statement to congregations for study and response by May 1, 1984.

The conference approved a motion by Anne Neufeld Rupp, Alexanderwohl Mennonite Church, Goessel, Kan., to send a message of understanding and support to churches in West Germany that are opposing installation of cruise and Pershing missiles in Germany by the United States.

A budget of about $328,000 was adopted for 1984. The largest share, $129,895, goes for home mission projects, including churches in Dallas and Houston; Lawrence, Salina, Manhattan and Walton, Kan.; Tulsa, Okla.; and Boulder and Fort Collins, Colo.

Ron Kraybill (center) mediates a discussion between Lois Schrag and Edwin J. Schmidt on whether or not to drill for oil on the grounds of Camp Mennoscah.

Antonio Arevalo, formerly of Colombia, reported on his work with a new Spanish-speaking Mennonite church in Dallas, and Peter Lin, formerly of Taiwan, on the Houston Chinese Mennonite Church, which he is serving.

Two new congregations were admitted to the conference, bringing to 69 the number of member churches in Kansas, Oklahoma, Colorado, Nebraska, Missouri and Texas.

The Mountain Community Mennonite Church in Palmer Lake, Colo., is the offspring of the Beth-El Mennonite Church in Colorado Springs. It began meeting in October 1982 and took in 47 charter members this October. It is also affiliated with the Rocky Mountain Conference of the Mennonite Church.

The Brookside Christian Fellowship of Kansas City, Mo., is an offshoot of Broadway Baptist Church there. It has been meeting since spring 1982 as a house church and has strong convictions about promoting peace. It has nine members.

New programs of the district during the past year include the Mother-to-Mother program (an ecumenical project in which church women relate as friends to low-income mothers); Kids on the Block, a puppet show to teach about disabilities; an anthem lending library at the Western District offices in North Newton, Kan.; a Central American concerns workshop in Buhler, Kan., held Oct. 29; and a published listing of congregational history materials. *Lois Barrett*

Hatfield comments on World Peace Tax Fund, GC tax action

Piscataway, N.J.—Senator Mark Hatfield (R-Ore.) was the featured speaker at the 200th anniversary celebration of the New Brunswick Theological Seminary here on Oct. 6.

Hatfield is one of two sponsors in the U.S. Senate of the World Peace Tax Fund, a bill which would allow citizens to designate the part of their taxes that now go to military purposes to relieve the causes and effects of war, which Hatfield says are "ignorance, illiteracy and injustice." The legislation has 46 sponsors in the House of Representatives.

Although the bill has a long way to go toward gaining enough support in both Congressional houses to become law, Hatfield said the principle which the bill represents has a history which reaches to the beginning of the Republic.

"Don't forget that one of the strongest constitutional precedents we have ever had established was the right of people to withhold their bodies from going to war under the conscience provisions provided for the historic peace churches," Hatfield told New Brunswick's alumni association. "So from the very beginning of the Republic we have always recognized that religious right to withhold one's self from serving in war. My view is that this tradition, this precedent, could as well be applied to the pocketbook as to the body."

When asked about recent action by the General Conference Mennonite Church to stop withholding federal income taxes from the wages of employees who wish to protest the lack of such a conscientious objector alternative for taxes, the senator was less optimistic. "Frankly, I don't think they will escape prosecution; I think they will be prosecuted," he said. *Steve Sprunger*

Philadelphia rally recalls convictions of early immigrants

Philadelphia (MCC U.S.)—Fifteen thousand people holding banners and candles covered the steps of the Philadelphia Art Museum Oct. 6 to call for a German-American friendship based on peace and not military alliances.

The Oct. 6 witness followed a Quaker and Mennonite worship service earlier in the evening.

The witness took place as U.S. Vice President George Bush and West German President Karl Carstens met at a plaza a mile away to toast 300 years of German settlement in America. Speakers at the witness charged that the governments of Germany and America were using the anniversary of the arrival of 13 Quaker and Mennonite families in Germantown, Pa., to promote the deployment of 572 Pershing II and cruise missiles in West Germany.

Samuel Caldwell, general secretary of the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, said, "We have come to remember publicly that the first German immigrants to settle the New World—Quakers and Mennonites—were people of peace, not of war." Caldwell added that in return the United States is deploying "weapons of destruction on their native soil."

Myron Augsburger, moderator of the Mennonite Church, told the assembly, "On some issues we cannot be neutral. The arms race is one of these. Tonight, unashamedly, as an evangelical Christian, I am against the arms race."

Augsburger said the arms race is contrary to the teachings of Jesus. "Turning the other cheek is our symbol of freedom," he said. "We don't let the enemy determine our response. We are free to act."

But Shirley Green, acting press secretary for Vice President Bush, told Mennonite Central Committee Information Services that Bush and Carstens were not promoting the deployment of missiles but celebrating "the contributions of German Americans to this country." The German President made no mention at the banquet of the proposed placement of missiles in West Germany, as President Reagan had during a reception for Carstens on Tuesday, the *Philadelphia Inquirer* reported.

Speakers at the witness addressed the rally from the steps of a sculpture in front of the neoclassical art museum building. Standing under a floodlit banner that procalimed "Friendship without missiles," they referred again and again to the beliefs of Germantown's first settlers.

The Quaker and Mennonite worship service earlier in the day combined elements of the traditions of each group, including prayer, singing, Scripture reading and silent worship.

Augsburger read the call to worship from Ephesians 2:14-18, which says that Christ is our peace, and He has reconciled mankind to God through the cross.

WE JOIN WITH THE GERMAN PEOPLE
QUAKERS for PeACe

Nearly 15,000 people gathered for the Oct. 6 rally in opposition to the deployment of new missiles in Europe. The gathering was organized by Mennonites and Quakers.

Over 800 people gathered for worship in a Quaker meetinghouse before the rally.

Confessions have been in sharp decline among the world's 700 million Catholics, especially those in Western Europe and North America. In a meeting recently with 201 bishops from around the world in a triennial synod, Pope John Paul II stressed the bishops' "particular responsibility" to educate their parishioners on the importance of going to confession. The synod is the sixth since 1965, when the Vatican recommended calling periodic assemblies of bishops to advise the pope on key issues.

Stewardship: U.S. Agriculture and World Hunger is the title of a weekend seminar to be held Nov. 11-13 at Swan Lake Christian Camp, Viborg, S.D. The issues will not be limited in interest only to farmers. Resource leaders for the seminar are Mark J. Epp, a farmer from Henderson, Neb., who has spent a number of years working firsthand with agriculture/hunger issues in South America, and Art and Jocele Meyer, staff members with Mennonite Central Committee. Registration is $20 per person, which includes lodging and meals. Contact Loren Friesen, Box 608, Mountain Lake, MN 56169.

Forty-three groups in 18 countries on six continents are sharing $446,000 in grants this year as allocated from the special fund of the World Council of Churches Programme to Combat Racism. More than half the money goes to three southern African organizations. The African National Congress gets $70,000 "for medical care, agricultural, educational and legal services." The Pan African Congress of Azania gets $50,000 for news and information services counteracting South African propaganda. The South West Africa People's Organization gets $105,000 for legal aid, humanitarian aid and assistance to families who've lost loved ones.

Teachers, students, farmers discuss global agricultural issues

Akron, Pa. (MCC)—A group of agriculturists presented their views of "Agriculture with a Global Perspective" at a conference at Mennonite Central Committee headquarters Oct. 7-9.

An audience of about 60-65 teachers, professors, students and farmers listened to the presentations and brainstormed together about how to deal with the problems of food production in a world of limited resources. According to conference organizers Art and Jocele Meyer of MCC's development education office, several responses were suggested:

- Constituent colleges in communication with MCC should work out a common field experience for agriculture students. This would help train them in working with the types of problems faced in the Third World.
- Agriculture instructors from state and church colleges and secondary schools should regularly discuss agriculture issues.
- A publication on constituent agricultural concerns should be reestablished.
- Further conferences dealing separately with First and Third World agriculture should be held.

The conference included presentations, responses and panel discussions. Harold Kauffman, director of the International Soybean Program, discussed the positive effects of the Green Revolution of the 1960s and 1970s, in which more productive varieties of rice, wheat, corn and other crops were developed.

However, he said, the revolution had its limitations, and in some cases the technology was misapplied. The term "Green Revolution" is a misnomer, Kauffman suggested, because what was truly revolutionary was not the new technology but the international spirit of cooperation among scientists.

Emerson Nafziger of the University of Illinois called the Green Revolution "simplistic" in its search for big results and its attempts to offer technological solutions for a country's agricultural problems without understanding its needs.

Kenton Brubaker, professor of biology at Eastern Mennonite College, suggested that agriculture workers from the First World should be careful in trying to change traditional agriculture. Calling himself an "agricultural fundamentalist," Brubaker said that agriculture must change slowly because it is a part of a people's culture, not simply a business for profit. Brubaker described two traditional agricultural societies: slash-and-burn and seminomadic, and said that each has its value within its setting.

Paul McKay, director of the International Development program at Bethel College in North Newton, Kan., said agriculturists working in the Third World should begin by identifying the limiting factors and attempt to achieve the optimum yield under the worst conditions, rather than the maximum yield under the best conditions.

The four speakers then discussed their differences in a panel discussion after their presentations.

In a later panel discussion Paul Longacre, Ken Graber, Rod King and Omer Brubaker talked about what agricultural programs they had been involved in while serving overseas with MCC.

Graber, who worked in Bolivia for 14 years with Mennonite Economic Development Associates, reminded the participants that producing enough food is not the only problem. There are also problems with the marketing, transportation and distribution of food that is already grown, he said.

On Saturday night Nancy Heisey, MCC co-secretary for Africa, spoke to the audience about her trip to Nairobi, Kenya, for an MCC planning session on food production.

Sunday morning Kenton Brubaker, David Gerber of Hesston (Kan.) College, Paul McKay, Edgar Stoesz of MCC and Richard Wall of Tabor College in Hillsboro, Kan., discussed ways to establish better communication and cooperation between constituent agriculturists, constituent schools and MCC. Noted Stoesz, "I have been reminded again how much we have to learn from each other . . . but not only that, we need opportunities where we can be with each other and where we can establish linkages."

MCC worker Tim Gamber demonstrates farming practices to Nigerian agents.

THE MENNONITE

ASSOCIATED MENNONITE
biblical SEMINARIES EDITION

SEMINARY BULLETIN
November 8, 1983

Called to participate

This is an abbreviation of the 1983-84 opening chapel message given by Henry Poettcker, president of Mennonite Biblical Seminary.

We have gathered from many parts of the globe to begin a new school year. In this opening chapel I want to reflect on the recurring theme at several of the church conferences this summer: the centrality of Christ. For we are gathered as those whose concern it is to proclaim the good news in Jesus Christ:

—to know about it,
—to understand it,
—to prepare for its proclamation,
—and then to proclaim it.

One thing that comes through the Gospel accounts most clearly is that the readers are called upon to participate. When the Baptist came preaching, he called people to join a radical, eschatological community, making ready for the longed-for Messiah. And that Messiah came. "After John had been arrested, Jesus came into Galilee proclaiming the gospel of God: 'The time has come; the kingdom of God is upon you; repent, and believe the gospel' " (Mark 1:14, 15).

Checking the context. The context of this announcement in Mark's Gospel is intriguing. These verses are located in the introduction. It is placed between the prologue and the series of sections which portray Jesus as the one who comes on a mission of deeds and teachings. That mission is introduced in these verses.

Using good pedagogy, the writer first shows us a picture and then we hear a saying. He locates the story in time (the forerunner has been imprisoned) and place (northern Palestine). The picture focuses on Jesus, whose commissioning had just been summarized.

Then the saying is announced. Two declarative statements in parallel structure presenting the content of the gospel are followed by two imperative statements calling for a response. James Luther Mays suggests that this passage is constructed with three crucial elements: gospel, kingdom of God, and Jesus of Nazareth. The substance of the good news is that the kingdom is present, calling for repentance and belief. And the occasion for this reality is Jesus' coming into Galilee.

What the reader is to ponder is the interrelation of these three elements. This is one of Mark's summary reports, designed to portray in proper relationship the moving story of the one who had become central in the faith and life of the early Christian community. Using interpretive guidelines for the material he has received, Mark presents what in effect became the first Gospel.

The historical environment is the forerunner's ministry, creating a certain anticipation. People were expecting something to happen. At that point Jesus came with the message that God's rule is at hand. Hearers were challenged to change their minds and exercise a new trust in the good news that God is setting people's lives aright.

Jesus' presentation of God's rule, the kingdom, came to be designated as the gospel. This was the early church's message also. So we have in effect a threefold repetition: the message of the Baptist, of Jesus and of the early believers. Repentance and belief go hand in hand. Like the Baptist, Jesus and the early believers proclaimed this time of the kingdom, so we today proclaim that same critical time. That is the call to *participate.*

Comparing the options. There is an urgency here. It has to do with where we are in the unfolding of history. We live in perilous times. George Orwell's *1984* was passed off as completely out of touch when he wrote that book 35 years ago. But as we approach 1984, the book is startlingly up to date—very disturbing.

Henry Poettcker

The setting in which we are called to participate has never been more crucial. All the issues and options which confronted Jesus as he pondered his task face us today very starkly:

—the Sadducee option of compromise with the dominant power . . . expediency is the word . . . go as far as you have to, so long as you benefit from it;

—the Pharisee solution of meticulous and unbending interpretation of the Torah . . . no compromise unless forced to do so . . . let us for once keep the law and the kingdom will come;

—the Zealot action for freedom from oppression . . . accomplished by the sword or whatever means it takes . . . the option facing Jesus in the temptations, at the triumphal entry and at Gethsemane.

continued on next page

Called to participate

continued from previous page

Threat or promise?

We face the same kind of issues and we look for the answer in similar solutions. Have we not heard that the way to peace is to arm ourselves to the hilt?

When Agnes and I visited the Evangelical Coptic Church seminary in Cairo this spring, many things went through our minds. The Coptic Church is being tested severely, but theirs is a stance of peace. Traditional privileges have eroded one by one. But when the bishop was deposed to bring the group into line, they refused to compromise. They closed their large cathedral rather than yield to stipulations placed on its use.

Harold Vogeler told us of his experiences as an envoy of peace. A young Arab Muslim student had become his close friend. They shared deeply. One day the student brought a drawing he had done. It showed an Arab holding a dove in his outstretched hand but a sword in the other hand. Vogeler looked at the drawing, then asked, "What would it take to offer the dove with both hands?" After a pause the student replied: "You could only do that if you were a prophet like Jesus."

You have come to AMBS to look at that kind of option. The world is crying for that kind of option. I call you to participate here in a preparation that will ready you to look at that option and, pray God, to use that option, to offer the dove with both hands!

Living the call. Look again at our text. Here is one who makes a proclamation: The time is fulfilled. This time had been ushered in by the Baptist who was arrested and silenced. Beheaded. Another voice took up the proclamation. It would continue for some months, then it too would be silenced. Crucified. The end? No, not the end. Others—the disciples and disciples of the disciples—are called to participate in this ministry of healing to the world.

What kind of preacher, what kind of a communicator, will you be? If you are walking with this Jesus, you *will be* a communication of those values which motivate your world view. So you are here to learn about and train for the "how to." But you also need to confront the "what" of the gospel. Unless you face that question, you will not have grasped the significance of his call.

What kind of preacher are you as you hear the message? God's reign is imminent. What does that mean? There's a question of loyalty here. This implies finding the life of Christ so convincing that in faith we turn constantly to his presence in the good news. In the words of James Mays, we decide to give our living over to the program, policy and power of the government Christ represents.

The central significance of Jesus as the Christ is the presupposition of everything we do. That is not an easy affirmation. Be sure, Jesus is not going to be a trademark for what is. This one who challenged every status quo and worldly power is no commonplace. He is the unexpected, radical Messiah—the Lamb.

And that says something about God, who comes in Christ to estranged human beings to reconcile them with the Eternal. This Jesus confronts us with a life that incarnates faith and hope and love—puts flesh on them—and makes us take this God seriously. That means that life can no longer just slide along.

We have been called to participate in the greatest commission ever given. Never take lightly this dare to proclaim that the rule of God has come near. It will lead to a radical change in your life and mine, following a teacher's example who in faithfulness brought that kingdom into reality. Let us dare to participate in obedience to that call. *Henry Poettcker*

Student participants in the Summer Supervised Experience in Ministry report learnings and growth.

Student enrollment

Students enrolled at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Ind., for the first semester 1983-84, totaled 244, up slightly from the 232 enrolled last year. Full-time equivalent enrollment reached 191.1 this semester compared to 172.2 in 1982, an increase of 11 percent. Mennonite Biblical Seminary enrollment is 102 or 81.2 in full-time equivalent, compared to 92 last year. Goshen Biblical Seminary has 142 or 109.9 in full-time equivalent, compared to 139 a year ago. The enrollment statistics include five students in the Seminary Consortium for Urban Pastoral Education (SCUPE) program in Chicago, two in Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) and seven in the Conference-Based Theological Education Programs in Ontario and Kansas.

Areas of study include Master of Divinity (153), Master of Arts in peace studies (9), one-year theology (44), unclassified (156), post graduate (4), certificate in theology (8) and audit (11).

During the semester, which runs from Sept. 1 to Dec. 21, the seminaries are offering 39 courses, colloquia, Supervised Experience in Ministry, and choir and organ. As part of their training, the seminaries provide for non-curricular experiences in Christian community, including K-groups, forums, community assembly, chapels, theological center guests, special lecture series and socials.

Announcement of interterm offerings Jan. 3-20, 1984

Prophetic Movement in Israel
—Millard C. Lind
1 Corinthians
—Howard H. Charles
Anabaptist History and Theology
—C. J. Dyck
Christian Education (Youth)
—Lavon Welty, Helmut Harder, Paula Diller Lehman
Evangelism and Church Planting
—Leland Harder
Urban Ministries Seminar (with EMS) in Washington
—Myron Augsburger and Don Jacobs

If interested in enrolling or obtaining further information, contact: Office of the Registrar, Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, 3003 Benham Ave., Elkhart, IN 46517.

Mennonite Men buy house in Elkhart

The organization of Mennonite Men of the Pacific District Conference has been in continuous operation for over 30 years. During this period their main project has been providing scholarships to assist students who want to go into full-time Christian service. These scholarships have been provided for graduate study in seminary or medical school.

Twenty-four scholarships have been given. For many years the scholarships were for $500 a year. This has now been increased to $1,000.

The latest project of Mennonite Men is the buying of a house in Elkhart which will provide reasonably priced housing for seminary students from the Pacific District. Known as Pacific House, this house will be an encouragement to students to attend Mennonite Biblical Seminary and will provide housing for pastors of the Pacific District who wish to take a short refresher course. The results of this last project should continue to bear fruit for many years to come. All pastors or prospective students wishing further information should contact: Ronald Claassen, 3075 N. Bethel, Sanger, CA 93657, telephone 209/441-1017. *Marden C. Habegger*

New Testament Greek class

The New Testament Greek class has increased from nine General Conference Mennonite Church students in 1966 (Mennonite Church students were enrolled in Greek at Goshen) to 41 students this summer, representing the enrollments from both seminaries.

Rachel Hilty Friesen was the only woman student in the '66 class. This year 12 women students enrolled, reflecting the growing number of women in the M.Div. program.

Our goal in the summer Greek course is to be able to translate the first six chapters of the Gospel of John. The formation into small groups, "each one teach one," has facilitated content learning, building of student spirit and assimilation into the seminary community.

It is a great joy and privilege to open the Scriptures in the original language of the New Testament and to see the response of students as this takes place. *Gertrude Roten, associate professor of Greek and New Testament*

Bethlehem '83 seminaries' report

"In the past 40 years we Mennonites have added the word seminary to our vocabulary," Helen Kruger, Kitchener, Ont., told participants in the Bethlehem '83 inter-Mennonite reporting sessions on Aug. 4. The General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church for the first time met in joint sessions Aug. 1-7 at Bethlehem, Pa.

Kruger noted that the denominations' three-year graduate training in biblical and theological studies had its beginning in college settings: Bluffton, 1921, Goshen, 1946, and Eastern Mennonite College, 1960. The successor to Witmarsum Seminary at Bluffton moved to Chicago in 1945 and was renamed Mennonite Biblical Seminary.

In 1958 Mennonite Biblical Seminary moved to a new campus at Elkhart, Ind. MBS and GBS that year formed an association known as Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries. In 1969 GBS moved all its operations to the Elkhart campus, becoming an independent institution under the Mennonite Board of Education. Eastern Mennonite Seminary continues as part of the college, each entity having its own dean.

Mennonite seminary enrollment has increased steadily, Kruger, an MBS trustee, said, and now appears to be leveling out. During 1982-83 the three seminaries had 309 students enrolled, or a full-time equivalent of 222.

Kruger interviewed the heads of the three seminaries for the major part of the 30-minute report: Henry Poettcker (MBS), Marlin E. Miller (GBS) and Richard Detweiler (EMS). Following is a condensed report of their responses.

GBS/MBS association. During the 1983-84 school year the seminaries are planning to celebrate 25 years of association, said Marlin Miller. The governing boards meet jointly for approximately half of each triennial session. The administrative work and decision making is shared, all classes are shared and "students gather without a sharp sense of being in two seminaries," Miller said.

Celebrating 25 years. "Celebration speaks of thanksgiving," said Henry Poettcker. "We're grateful for a dedicated faculty, church structures that enable us to work as we do and students who come to the total of 244." One of the times of celebration will occur during the Oct. 15 board sessions, Poettcker said.

New center at EMS. Richard Detweiler said the Evangelism and Church Planting Center opening in the fall at Eastern Mennonite Seminary would assist the church through course offerings, consultation services and sponsoring seminary for field persons to share from their experience and training.

Preaching in AMBS. Henry Poettcker said AMBS in the past has provided courses to help both with content and delivery of sermons. The "how to speak" part will get additional emphasis with testing, beginning in the fall, of all incoming students and remedial work assigned in speech as indicated.

Training at a Mennonite seminary. Richard Detweiler: "Anabaptist-Mennonite faith is learned through more than academic instruction. It is experienced as a total way of life and understanding of faith. It cannot simply be added onto training in another denomination's seminary."

Women and church vocations. From five women students in 1970 representing 6 percent of students at the three seminaries, enrollment in 1980 reached 94, or 39 percent of all seminary students. Vocational goals of these women include the pastorate, Christian education, teaching, mission and service, and graduate study for teaching at our schools. Twenty-two women are now pastors in General Conference congregations and 14 in Mennonite Church congregations.

Jim Metzler, AMBS admissions counselor, at Bethlehem '83

Theological education in local areas. For the past five years conference-based theological education has been going on in Ontario, Pennsylvania and Kansas.

Pastors and students have the opportunities of taking a variety of courses, either for personal enrichment and as part of a continuing education program, or as courses which are recognized in a seminary degree program.

Broader issues. Marlin Miller: "Two major challenges face the church. The first is, How we can become a more missionary church? By this I mean not simply sending more missionaries to other countries but a network of missionary communities and congregations which proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ, God's kingdom and Christian discipleship, and incarnate this good news. The other is to become even more a biblical people . . . how to live and to think as a biblical people and then to develop our theology of biblical authority and interpretation from that."

Richard Detweiler: "I underline what Marlin has just said. I'd add the issue of the nature of salvation—the relation of atonement and discipleship and the relation of personal or individual and corporate salvation. Also, the nature of the church in the world. Are we to be a servant people in the way of the cross—and how to be that—or a power-stance Christianity that seeks role dominance in society?"

Open mike. "Do you see a possibility of EMS joining with AMBS?" Richard Detweiler: "That's a good question. We've enjoyed and benefited by cooperative working together. We serve somewhat similar constituencies. Perhaps the first step will be to discover how we can better complement each other in ways we serve the Mennonite Church together."

John Esau of the Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton, Kan., reported their congregation's efforts to support a college-age student who is open to church vocations. The person is exposed to the workings of the congregation, its history and participates in worship leadership, preaching, boards and committees, and pastoral visitation.

Marlin Miller said the Bethel College congregation's experience illustrates that theological training is not just a seminary task. "The real issue," he said, "is, How many pastors are congregations, conferences *and* seminaries producing? This is a common task of calling people, discerning people who have a call from God and whose call is confirmed in the congregation and church settings, and who also may be sent or come to the seminaries in Harrisonburg and Elkhart for further training."

Dean Jake Elias listens.

A community chaplaincy program for ex-offenders in Moncton, N.B., and a group home in Port Hardy, B.C., received approval at the Sept. 30 - Oct. 1 Mennonite Central Comittee Canada executive committee meetings held in Winnipeg. The two new voluntary service programs were among agenda items that included discussion about a new building for MCC Canada and MCC Manitoba, the announcement of a special food drive and budgetary concerns.

Six scholarships for the 1984-85 academic year are available for college or graduate students pursuing mental health services studies, according to Carl L. Good, executive director of Mennonite Mental Health Services. To qualify, candidates must be college juniors, seniors or graduate students with a declared major and vocational interest in mental health, developmental disabilities or related fields. They must also have at least a C+ grade average and show interest and participation in the church. Applications must be received by March 1, 1984. For more information write to Carl L. Good, MMHS, 21 S. 12th St., Akron, PA 17501.

Fairview, Okla., will be the site of the Mennonite Central Committee Central States annual meeting on Feb. 25, 1984. Administrators of MCC's overseas and domestic programs will report to the MCC Central States constituency and present needs and challenges of MCC's work in the United States and abroad. Invitations will be sent to all MCC constituent congregations of the 16-state region. In addition, anyone interested in the work of MCC is invited to attend.

Canadian peace coalition visits Moscow, Washington

Toronto—During the week of Sept. 11-18, two groups from Christian Initiative for Peace, a recently formed group of Christians from Toronto committed to ending the international nuclear arms race, traveled simultaneously to Moscow and Washington to deliver thousands of letters for peace which had been written by thousands of Canadians to the two governments.

"Our commitment to peacemaking is deeper and stronger after these trips," said members of CIP. "Peace is not only a distant kingdom devoutly to be prayed for. In fact, the more distant and impossible that kingdom may seem to be, the more urgent is the Christian calling to work for it."

Members of the group include Will Neufeld and ministers John Hess and Connie Zehr, all of Warden Woods Mennonite Church. Neufeld was among the group that traveled to Washington, where the delegation met with a senator, various congressional aides and peace groups, and the First Secretary of the Russian Embassy.

Of special interest to this delegation was the deployment of cruise missiles, the testing of which is scheduled to occur on Canadian soil. Most congressional aides were unaware that many Canadians were opposed to the testing.

The delegation to Moscow, which included Hess, felt compelled to raise issues of human rights alongside those of nuclear disarmament. This antagonized Soviet officials already apprehensive about the group's intentions.

The official response was initially positive in discussions with the peace delegation. However, officials quickly disputed CIP's claim that the Soviet Union was jointly responsible with the United States for the nuclear arms race. Instead, they insisted that the Americans were wholly reponsible.

Members of the two delegations recalled how they were called communists in Washington and capitalist agents in Moscow. But they made the trips, they insist, as Christians. They continue to believe ". . . as Christians, that the course of war is not inevitable, and that peace remains a constant possibility." *From reports by Leonard Friesen and Mary Jo Leddy*

RSV, NIV to be used in Foundation Series revision

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—The New International Version and the Revised Standard Version are the choices of editors for use as Bible translations for the revised *Foundation Series for Children*. The use of the two translations will be different in the various age groups.

In an article for an upcoming issue of *Builder* on the subject, Laurence Martin, managing editor of *The Foundation Series for Children*, writes, "Next to personal tastes in art and graphic illustrations, personal preferences for Bible translations ranks high as a controversial issue." Martin says that the decision to go with NIV and RSV as Foundation Series translations was made "through research and dialogue between participating denominations."

General Conference revisions editor Edna Dyck said that "the matter of choice of a Bible translation elicits much frustration, especially when it comes to memorization. There are so many translations available. A poll of scholars and theologians from the participating groups showed that the NIV and RSV were the preferred versions."

Dyck added that her office is frequently contacted by church groups and parents about choosing a Bible translation for gift-giving. Given the planned use of the NIV and RSV in the revised Foundation Series, those would be good choices, she said.

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Mennonite Central Committee needs sponsors and hosts for trainees from 29 countries participating in this year's International Visitor Exchange program. These 79 young women and men will soon complete the first six months of their stay in North America, and MCC must find them homes and work for their second six-month term that begins in mid-February. Those interested should contact MCC, 21 S. 12th St., Akron, PA 17501, by Dec. 25.

Students with bright cloth bags slung over their shoulders walk to their classes in Svay Rieng province in Kampuchea. The first 9,055 colorful school kits arrived in the capital city of Phnom Penh in May 1982. Shipments followed in August and November of that year, with Mennonite Central Committee workers assisting in the distribution. By May 1983, MCC had shipped 94,395 kits to Kampuchea. The effort to make, gather and send the kits began in October 1981 when MCC launched a campaign to send 86,000 school kits to Kampuchea—each consisting of two notebooks, two pencils, a pen, a ruler and an eraser in a drawstring bag.

Indian leaders council holds annual meeting in Montana

Ashland, Mont.—Opening the Oct. 6-10 annual meeting of the Mennonite Indian Leaders Council was a short speech by Lawrence Hart, staff worker for Oklahoma, reminding the group what day it was.

He pointed out that on Oct. 6, 1683, exactly 300 years earlier, some Mennonites from Germany arrived in North America. "They came not with violence, liquor and guns like some of the others, but they came with the Good News," he said.

Some of those present of German background responded to the mention that Hart had made of their ancestors by asserting that contact with native people in America helped them better understand their own faith. Later Ted Risingsun, staff worker for the Mennonite Cheyenne congregations in Montana, asked if more emphasis could be given to peace teaching and providing young people with alternatives to military service.

Willis Busenitz, pastor of the White River Cheyenne Mennonite Church, chaired the annual meeting, which was hosted by the four congregations on the Cheyenne reservation in Montana. Other groups represented were people working among the Cree and Saulteaux people from the Native Ministries staff of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada, the Hopi reservation in Arizona and the Southern Cheyenne and Arapaho churches in Oklahoma.

There were 33 baptisms reported during the year. The small church at Birney, Mont., will now be pastored by a self-supporting minister with help from other Montana congregations. The Bacavi, Ariz., church, which had been closed for a short period, is now holding a Sunday school along with the neighboring congregation.

Many of the Mennonite Indian congregations reported extensive involvement in community concerns and services, such as audio tape ministries, work on land rights of native people, rehabilitation efforts with people suffering alcoholism and other drug dependencies, working for regulations governing the adoption of Indian children by non-Indian families and a lengthy list of other projects.

Some of the fund-raising events also help to strengthen community ties such as crafts fairs, community suppers and other celebrative events.

There has been constant pressure to find ways to improve the ministry of the Indian churches. In his report, Ted Risingsun asked for a review of the last 80 years of church work in Montana to help leaders face their situation honestly and openly. The Mennonite Indian Leaders Council is planning a special review of its work in March 1984. *Stanley Bohn*

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Interterm at AMBS provides pastors and congregational leaders a special opportunity for continuing education. It is also a good occasion for prospective students to explore seminary training.

Students select one course for credit or audit. Classes meet daily for three weeks. The first week begins Tuesday and ends Saturday. Other weeks are Monday-Friday. The Pastors' Workshop follows on January 23-27.

There are two special offerings in 1984. Three guest instructors will teach a course in Youth Ministries. The Urban Seminar in Washington, January 3-15, is co-sponsored with Eastern Mennonite Seminary.

1984 JANUARY INTERTERM January 3-20

Prophetic Movement in Israel	Millard Lind
The First Corinthian Epistle	Howard Charles
Anabaptist History and Theology	C.J. Dyck
Evangelism and Church Planting	Leland Harder
The Church's Ministry with Youth	Lavon Welty/Helmut Harder/ Paula Lehman
Urban Ministry Seminar (Jan 3-15)	Myron Augsburger/ Donald Jacobs

For more information and application forms, write or call:
AMBS Admission Office, 3003 Benham Ave., Elkhart, IN 46517 (219) 295-3726

In Ghana people are pitifully short of Bibles, the American Bible Society reports. Behind the shortage lies an inability to pay for Scriptures to be brought in from outside the country. The government bars the transfer of currency beyond its borders. Local printers cannot produce books the size of Bibles and Testaments and of the quality required by the Bible Society. Printing ink and glue for bindings are unobtainable, let alone paper. To a large extent, Ghanese Christians have to rely on those Scriptures made possible by the generosity of donors in other countries.

The Seminary Consortium for Urban Pastoral Education is planning its fourth national Congress on Urban Ministry to be held April 25-28, 1984, in Chicago. The theme "Congregations, Cultures and Cities" will have a special emphasis on urban congregations and pluralism in the city. Any denomination, church agency or individual interested in presenting a model of ministry related to one or more of these topics for consideration as a workshop at the congress should contact SCUPE immediately. Address all inquiries to Carol Ann McGibbon, SCUPE, 30 W. Chicago Ave., Chicago, IL 60610, 312/944-2153.

"Ethical Reflections on Respect for Life," a statement issued by the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, says that human life on this planet is threatened by nuclear weapons, by violations of human rights, by economic policies that undermine people's identity and by various other things but that in Canada "the most flagrant attack upon life, because it is a direct attack upon the most defenseless, is seen in the flood of abortions in recent years."

Commission on Education begins operation under new structure

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—Meeting at Meadowdale Ranch in Estes Park, Colo., Sept. 23-25, the General Conference's Commission on Education endorsed the fifth revision of a document outlining its new organizational structure and began bringing COE's operation into line with the new model.

That structure eliminates the commission's four departments in favor of two basic divisions—education and publishing—each with a complement of staff to work at COE's goals by defining objectives and proposing "action steps" by which those objectives can be reached.

Commissioners at the September meetings reaffirmed their four basic goals: increasing biblical understanding, strengthening families, strengthening church community and developing more effective disciples.

"There is a significant difference between the way the commission will operate from now on and the way it has previously done its work," said secretary for young adult and church school education James Dunn. "Rather than having commission members deal with the practical week-to-week matters of each department, they will now carry primary responsibility for setting the larger goals, the general direction of COE. That, in turn, places more responsibility on the staff to share objectives with the commission and then define the 'action steps' required."

Dunn said the new model will also mean a change in the way budgets are constructed. "Instead of the various areas of responsibility getting budget money, staff members will now identify objectives for their departments and determine how they help meet COE's overall goals. It means that staff must come to the commission with a more unified budget and approach to the total task," Dunn said.

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Waldemar Janzen

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316 283 5100

Following a one-year slump in enrollment, Bluffton (Ohio) College has this fall experienced a 13 percent increase in new students and a modest increase in total enrollment. Official enrollment figures this fall show a total registration of 616 students, compared with 601 last fall. Of these, 523 students are full time and 87 are part time. There are 227 new students, compared with 200 last fall.

Mayfair Mennonite Church, Saskatoon, sponsored a seminar Sept. 8-10 on "Defending the Biblical Gospel" with John Warwick Montgomery as speaker. He dealt with such topics as "How can a good God permit evil?"; "How can miracles be reconciled with modern science?"; "What about alleged errors and contradictions in Scripture?" and "Why Christ is the only answer." On Sept. 18 the church held a panel discussion on the Bethlehem '83 conference. Those who had attended the conference were on the panel.

Young Christians for Global Justice is holding its fifth annual event in Winnipeg Dec. 29 - Jan. 2. YCGJ is the North American ecumenical youth council that relates directly to the World Council of Churches subunit on youth. The mandate of YCGJ is to provide young people with ecumenical youth linkages throughout the world, with current information about justice concerns and with opportunities to explore their faith in light of local and global justice issues. More information is available from YCGJ, 600 Jarvis St., Toronto, ON M4Y 2J6, phone (416) 924-9192.

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deaths

Lloyd Penner, pastor of Bethel Church, Fortuna, Mo., since November 1977, died on Aug. 25 at the age of 71. A service was held at Bethel Church and the burial was in Hillsboro, Kan. At the time of his death, he was the oldest full-time pastor in the Central District. He is survived by his wife, Helen, and four married children.

ministers

Nancy Kerr has resigned as pastor of Cincinnati Fellowship and is now a student at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Ind.

Stephen Penner has become pastor of Prescott (Ariz.) Church.

Lotus Troyer has resigned as pastor of Flanagan (Ill.) Church, effective when a new pastor is found and no later than June 1984.

Elmer Wall will become pastor of Salem-Zion Church, Freeman, S.D., in January 1984. He has served as pastor of the Carlock/North Danvers (Ill.) churches for 12½ years in a shared ministry program.

Harris Waltner has resigned as pastor of Bethel Church, Mountain Lake, Minn., effective May 31, 1984. He has served the congregation for 10 years.

Baumans

Foreman

Henry

Wall

Dyck

Hill

Jantzen

workers

Mark and *Janice Draves Bauman*, Faith Church, Minneapolis, have begun three-year assignments with Mennonite Central Committee in Indonesia in agricultural, public health and nutrition work. Mark has a bachelor's degree in agronomy from the University of Minnesota in St. Paul. Janice has a bachelor's degree in English from the same school. His parents are David and Faith Bauman of Godhra, India. Her parents are Keith and Patricia Draves of Rochester, Minn.

Colleen Dyck, Osler (Sask.) Church, began a one-year MVS term on Aug. 8 as a day-care worker in Beatrice, Neb. A 1983 graduate of Rosthern (Sask.) Junior College, she is the daughter of Peter and Tina Dyck of Saskatoon.

Ed Foreman, St. John's Episcopal Church, Milwaukee, began a two-year MVS term on Aug. 1 as an office manager in Denver with Newsed, a minority economic development corporation. A 1983 graduate of Whitworth College, Spokane, Wash., with a bachelor's degree in business management, he is the son of Ida Foreman of Milwaukee.

Joyce Henry, St. Martha's Catholic Church, Uniondale, N.Y., began a two-year MVS term on Aug. 22 as a teacher at Lakeview Academy in Chicago. A 1983 graduate of the University of Virginia in Charlottesville with a master's degree in chemistry, she is the daughter of Robert and Margaret Henry of Uniondale.

Meg Hill, Arvada (Colo.) Church, began a two-year MVS term on Aug. 15 at the SER Vocational Institute, a job training program for Hispanics, in Chicago. A 1983 high school graduate, she is the daughter of Robert and Dorsy Hill of Arvada.

Karen Jantzen, Grace Church, Regina, began a one-year MVS term on Aug. 15

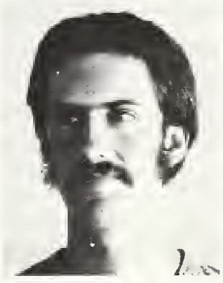
Justice Fellowship, a non-profit agency to seek widespread reform in the criminal justice sytem, was officially formed Oct. 1, according to Charles Colson, president of Prison Fellowship, an interdenominational Christian outreach to inmates, ex-offenders and their families. The new organization will provide assistance to state and federal legislators who are dealing with criminal justice issues, as well as develop grassroots support for needed reforms. For more information, contact Daniel W. Van Ness, Justice Fellowship, Box 17500, Washington, DC 20041.

RECORD

Osbeck

Potter

as a day-care worker in Beatrice, Neb. A 1983 graduate of Mount Royal College in Calgary with a diploma in early childhood education, she is the daughter of Henry and Margaret Jantzen of Regina.


Purnell

Greg Osbeck, First Evangelical Free Church, Grand Rapids, Mich., began a one-year MVS term on July 5 at the Latino Youth Shelter in Chicago. A 1981 graduate of Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Deerfield, Ill., he is the son of Kenneth and Elizabeth Osbeck of Grand Rapids.

Lawrence Potter, First Baptist Church, Manteca, Calif., began a one-year MVS term on Sept. 1 as a home repair worker in Portland, Ore. He is a 1983 graduate of Bethel College with a bachelor's degree in chemistry.

Mark Purnell, Jubilee Church, North Newton, Kan., began a two-year MVS term on Sept. 1 as a carpentry supervisor with Latino Youth in Chicago. A 1981 graduate of Hesston (Kan.) College, he is the son of Herbert and Elsie Purnell of Pasadena, Calif.

COMMISSION ON EDUCATION

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There have been twelve Project: Teach events since the beginning of the program in 1972. Freeman, S.D.; Gretna, Man.; Rosthern, Sask.; Camp Squeah, B.C.; and Newton, Kans., have been some of the places hosting the workshop. Any district/province wishing to cooperate in sponsoring Project: Teach should contact COE.

The next Project: Teach will be held in Owen Sound, Ontario, on April 1-6. Encourage and help your teachers to participate!

Meet Edna Dyck,

Secretary for Children's Education. In addition to Children's Education responsibilities Edna works on the Foundation Series as revisions editor and COE contact person for district and provincial conference Resource Persons. Edna has also written for the Foundation Series. Edna is also the copy editor for Faith and Life Press. Edna has worked for COE since 1978.

COE Calendar

November

20-22 Religious Education Association Convention (Anaheim)

February

16-19 PERSPECTIVE '84 (Minneapolis)

April

1-6 Project: Teach (Owen Sound, Ont.)

Marriage Encounter Schedule

11/18-20—Spruce Lake, Pa., and Calgary; 1/13-15—Champaign, Ill.; 1/20-22—Concordia, Kan.

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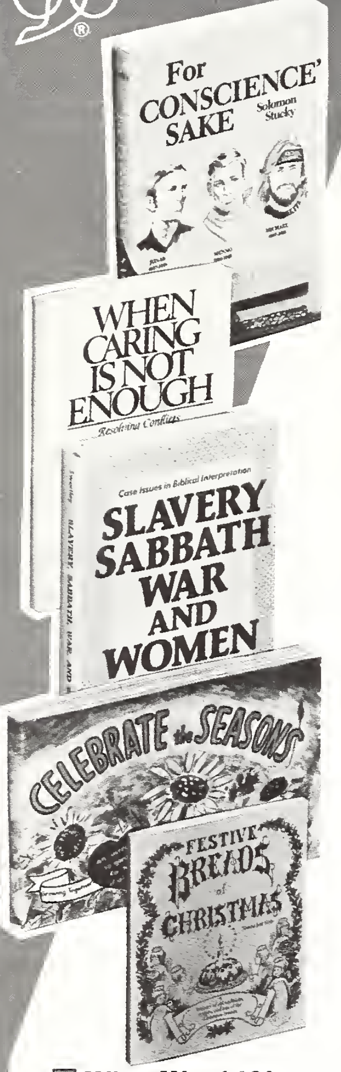
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Give us pictures, not art

Some months ago, coming into the Sunday school classroom and picking up the *Adult Bible Study Guide*, I opened the cover and, seeing the picture of the writer, Katie Funk Wiebe, I said, "I always appreciate the picture of the writer in the quarterly." A classmate replied, "I do too, but I don't appreciate the picture on the front cover." After a brief discussion we agreed we felt the same way about the front covers on *The Mennonite*.

What about the front cover of the *Bethlehem '83 Workbook*? One almost shrinks back at the brown, snaky triple lines, separated by a thin white line, intersected at regular intervals by diagonal thin white lines. Then turning to the back cover one sees what seem to be the tails of these headless worm-like creatures. Somewhat pleasing color is added by the interspersion of the blue squares (one black one—why?) each with two rounded-off corners, and a thin white cross off-center.

This may all be first-rate art from the artist's viewpoint, even highly acceptable by many modern journalists. But is it instructive, informational or even inspiring to the average reader; like an autumn scene would be, or some mountain scenery, or even an old dilapidated barn or farmhouse?

Some magazines have on the inside front or back cover a short paragraph describing or explaining what is on the front cover. How would it be if the editor of a publication who tolerates and accepts such contemporary art—or any kind of a picture, for that matter—would ask the artist to explain just what kind of message or information he or she wishes to convey to the reader and print it somewhere in the magazine? That might also help to educate the public to appreciate modern art.

At the General Conference at Bethlehem in 1962—when our official symbol was just beginning to come into use—one of the delegates asked the artist about it. After having it briefly explained to him, he replied, "Oh, I thought it was a pumpkin." The artist has succeeded in keeping the symbolism in simple curved and straight lines, and although I have never heard or read an explanation of it, I interpret it as the world, with the cross on top, resting on the Bible, which probably has never occurred to many people. I would earnestly recommend a slight change. If the line at the bottom would be made to look like the end of an open Bible—still simple—everybody would catch the symbolism at a glance. *C. B. Friesen, 415 E. First, Newton, KS 67114*

Sept. 6

A view from India

Congratulations for the wonderful editorial on "Leadership and Leaders" (April 26 issue). I am an Indian lay Christian and ex-social worker, engaged in the question of leadership at the grass-roots level in socioeconomic change.

There are some things I would like to share with kindred spirits. Also would like to hear from any Christian brother or sister who could share further insights for my work. *Please write to me.*

The good seed scattered in the editorial may find further germination even in India. *John Alexander, Seven Oaks, Bala Hisar, Mussoorie (U.P.), India*

Sept. 20

Correction on photo caption

The picture of the little Japanese boy on page 465 in the Sept. 27 issue is from Nagasaki, not Hiroshima. It was taken at about 9 a.m. on Aug. 10, the day after the Nagasaki bombing, at Ibinokuchi-machi in Nagasaki, about 700 meters south of the hypocenter, by Yosuke Yamahata. Religious News Service must have had it miscaptioned. *Robert L. Ramseyer, 3003 Benham Ave., Elkhart, IN 46517*

Oct. 11

Sometimes no "right" thing

I respond to "A Letter" by Mike and Emily Klassen (Sept. 27 issue).

Last spring we discovered that our beautiful, bright, 10-month-old son had a malignant brain tumor. The outlook was bleak, and our world seemed to crumble around us.

However, there was an outpouring of love, prayer and encouragement from people in the area and throughout the country. We received calls, visits and literally hundreds of letters. These helped tremendously to sustain us through this ordeal.

I can identify with many of the feelings in the Klassens' letter. Most of the letters were great, but we did receive some letters and comments which seemed inappropriate and initially caused us some pain. With these we just tried to say, "It's the thought that counts."

On the other hand, I have a dear friend who did not contact us at all at first. I was hurt by this and wondered why she didn't care enough to write or call. When she finally did call, through a tearful apology she said, "I just didn't know what to say."

I have since decided that I personally would rather hear the wrong words from someone who cares than not to hear at all. I would hate for someone to be thinking of us and be afraid to express it.

Sometimes there is no "right" thing to say. Sometimes all one can say is, "I'm so sorry this has happened; I am praying for you." *Jean Miller, 423 S. Main, Bluffton, OH 45817*

Oct. 11

God does not interfere

As a professional who works with developmentally disabled individuals and as a person with a chronic illness, I have to agree with the article written by Mike and Emily Klassen (Sept. 27 issue).

It is difficult for me to believe that our loving God sits on his throne and selects families to receive disabled children or chooses individuals to endure the difficulties associated with all disabilities. God doesn't interfere with the process as set up years ago and proclaimed to be "good." He does give those who are disabled and their families strength from within and strength from others who are sensitive to their needs. *Lois Ratzlaff, 3259 Mayfair Blvd., Fresno, CA 93703*

Oct. 14

Thanks for your support

Through *The Mennonite* may we express our deepest gratitude to all you friends who have prayed for us and have been of much spiritual support to us through your letters, particularly during the last couple years or so?

These have been times of much strain for us. But in our spirit we have always known that you have been standing by our side, praying and concerned about us. We believe that our Lord answers prayers. Thank you, dear friends.

We have been transferred from Jagdeeshpur to another hospital of EHA, an organization of which our GC Mennonite hospitals are members. We are continuing our service to our Lord and covet your continuing prayers. *Amrit and Kamala Sonwani, HBM Hospital, Lalitpur, District Lalitpur, U.P. India, 284 403*

Oct. 17

The linenseller of Taguatinga

Ellie Loewen

The linenseller walked the dusty streets of Taguatinga. Clapping to announce his arrival, he greeted his customers with a warm smile and "*a paz do senhor*" (the peace of the Lord). Where earlier he used to come only to sell his wares and to collect the weekly payments, he now came with a new interest in the people he was dealing with. One such couple was Jose Maria and Fransisca de Sousa.

At the time, Zé Maria worked as a bartender in Ceilándia. Amadeu used to look him up on Mondays, hoping that he'd have some cash around to make a payment for the blanket his wife had purchased. At the bar and in their house, Amadeu spent many an hour talking about his new-found purpose and joy in life. Every week he would share a promise from Scripture and invite them to have Christ change their lives. Fransisca was interested and wished her husband would stop drinking. To please a man he respected, Zé Maria would promise Amadeu they'd come for the service on Sunday. Amadeu waited in vain for his friends to appear. Faithfully he would go back during the week, listen to their excuses, and challenge them again to come and see what church was about.

Amadeu (left), the linenseller, and David Gary Loewen lay hands of blessing on a couple.

The Sunday came when the whole family was there. Zé Maria had now already been unemployed for three months. Fransisca was washing laundry for others, and begging milk and bread for the two children. Because they had no money to pay rent, the landlord had asked them to move out of the two-room shack. During this difficult time, Amadeu had continued to drop by, and this particular time he offered to bring them to church in his VW. After the *culto* (worship), we were invited for *cafezinho* (coffee) at Amadeu and Ivonete's. An evening was marked when the pastor could come answer some of their questions about religion and explain their need of salvation.

It was an interesting though somewhat awkward visit in their home that first night. Fransisca was nervous about hosting special guests in her poor abode. She had fastened bedspreads to the walls to cover up the poorly painted wood. The pots on her stove were scrubbed until we could see our reflection in them. Fransisca shyly served us cafezinho and crackers her neighbor lady had given her. We assured them of our love for them, that because of Christ we wanted to be their friends. "Before God we are all equals," we tried to explain. We repeated the invitation to get to know Christ, who would be their Savior too. Before leaving, we brought their needs before the Lord in prayer.

Zé Maria got a job that week, and there began his upward climb. He, the father of a young family, now came to ask for spiritual help. He wanted to learn to read and use the new Bible he had received. Every Sunday he walked the mile to church, eager to hear more, eager to learn. When weather wasn't favorable and his wife preferred not to venture out, he still would come, carrying his 3-year-old girl under the umbrella. Then Zé Maria made a decision for Christ. He asked to be baptized.

At her husband's baptism, Fransisca heard the call of God for her life. She longed to be kneeling at his side, and in her heart she made a personal commitment to Christ. Because she never learned to read, regular visits were necessary to explain in a language she could understand, what "being born again" was about. Even then she had difficulty sensing the same eagerness her husband had expressed. But Fransisca also changed. She gave a joyous testimony at her baptism a few weeks later.

For a year now Zé Maria has worked in the Mennonite bookstore in Brasilia. He was elected to serve as second treasurer on the National Directory of the Mennonite Churches. Continuing with the same eagerness to learn, he has proven to be a competent student in the layleaders' course at church. Both Zé Maria and Fransisca help teach Sunday school. The Taguatinga Church council elected him to be the president when in January 1984 Amadeu will take over as pastor.

We thank God for the linenseller who was willing to share Christ while selling his wares. We thank him for Zé Maria and Fransisca, who now belong to the family of God and joyfully are serving the Taguatinga Church.

Ellie Loewen, C.P. 4091, 72.121 Taguatinga, D.F., Brazil, works with her husband, David Gary, in evangelism, church planting and leadership training in Taguatinga. Her article comes from one of the congregations.

Can we learn from KAL 007?

William Keeney

Shooting down the Korean 747 (KAL 007) with 269 people killed was a tragic event. The senselessness heightens the tragedy.

Responses to the crash cover a wide range and show some people are learning the wrong lessons from history.

Paranoia. The tragedy is likely a result of paranoia—an unreal fear. The Soviets claim they thought the plane was on a spying mission, that they tried to warn it, lead it down to one of their airfields and remove any intelligence material gathered. They fired only after the plane ignored such signals and after it left Soviet air space.

At first the United States dismissed completely that a passenger plane could be confused with a spy mission. Two or three days later—after much rhetoric, accusing the Soviets of having a total disregard of innocent life—it was leaked that a U.S. RC-135 surveillance plane crossed the flight path of KAL 007 and the two could be confused in darkness. The United States still contended that the sighting by the Soviet fighter pilot should have made clear that the aircraft was a civilian passenger plane.

That the United States has been sending spy planes to the area where the KAL plane flew—and the Soviets consider the area very sensitive for their military security—means the Soviet paranoia had some justification.

The paranoia is not only on the side of the Soviets. U.S. Rep. Larry McDonald (D-Ga.) was on the KAL aircraft and killed. He was one of the most anti-Soviet members of Congress and president of the John Birch Society. Some of his followers immediately claimed the plane was shot down to assassinate him.

Their paranoia comes from an exaggerated sense of their own importance and their threat to the Soviets. They may also feed on TV programs such as Mission Impossible and the stories of CIA murder plots against Castro and other heads of state. It seems highly unlikely that the Soviets would have engineered the KAL plane into their air space to give them an excuse to shoot it down, and then be stupid enough about international reactions to shoot down 268 other people to get the one man.

Primitive human urges. Some of the responses to the shooting showed primitive urges and the failure to learn the ineffectiveness and even counterproductive nature of certain types of responses.

1. The most primitive would be those who proposed shooting down Russian planes in retaliation or blowing up one of their civilian airliners at an airport. It would make us operate at least as badly as the Soviets, and we would therefore be ethically no better.

2. Proposals were made to retaliate by canceling the recently completed grain deal or the talks on arms control. Perhaps the more rational leadership has learned from the Afghanistan situation that such retaliatory actions likely cost you more than those against whom the action is supposed to be directed. U.S. farmers suffered most from the previous concellation of grain sales. If anyone in the Soviet Union was hurt, it was the innocent Soviet people, not the decision makers. To cancel the arms control talks could result in further escalation of the arms race. It is already too costly in terms of inflation, depletion of scarce goods and threat of disaster.

3. Some proposed stopping the support to Poland through extension of payments on loans. This would threaten them with bankruptcy and place on the Soviet Union the burden of helping Poland. Again, it is doubtful if the Soviet Union could or would be willing to rescue Poland from its economic difficulties. The main losers would probably be the Polish people and the western banks which made the loans.

4. Others, including President Reagan, have said that the shooting down of the KAL plane shows the need for the MX missile. They fail to see that it is the development of such weapons and other military pressures which increase international tensions and feed the paranoia that infects both the East and the West. (All the vaunted military might of the United States did not stop this disaster.)

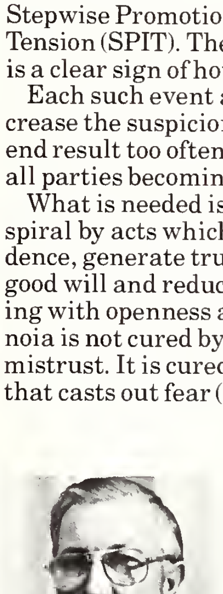
The East-West conflict is caught in a Stepwise Promotion of International Tension (SPIT). The tragedy of KAL 007 is a clear sign of how the spiral goes up.

Each such event and the reactions increase the suspicion and mistrust. The end result too often leads to a war with all parties becoming victims.

What is needed is a reversal of the spiral by acts which create interdependence, generate trust based on acts of good will and reduce suspicions by acting with openness and integrity. Paranoia is not cured by increasing fear and mistrust. It is cured by that perfect love that casts out fear (1 John 4:18).

Sept. 12

Charlotte Oldham, 19, a student from Wesleyan (Connecticut) University, cries as she throws flowers into the sea near Sakhalin island in the Pacific on Sept. 6, in memory of her brother John, believed killed among the 269 people on Korean Air Lines flight 007 when shot down by Soviet missiles.



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TELEVISION

Nuclear war in Kansas

The Day After, *an ABC Circle Film directed by Nicholas Meyer, to be broadcast the evening of Nov. 20 on ABC TV*

Reviewed by John Linscheid, 924 Louisiana, Apt. 2, Lawrence, KS 66044

I watched my hometown die in a nuclear war several weeks ago. ABC television came to Lawrence, Kan., to premier its made-for-TV movie *The Day After*. The film graphically depicts the effect of a nuclear war on the area surrounding Kansas City.

Families prepare for weddings, students enroll at university, a doctor chats with his wife and daughter, and ordinary people live ordinary lives while, in the background, snatches of news reports tell of a heightened military crisis in Europe. For some the denial of the international crisis continues even as missiles arch above the beautiful hills of Missouri and Kansas. For many it is only then that desperate survival measures begin.

The film tries to show how people would experience a nuclear blast and is graphic enough to be somewhat, though not overwhelmingly, gruesome. It follows the "survivors" as society deteriorates in the wake of mass destruction and as individuals try to cope with the effects of radiation burns and sickness. The movie ends with a human embrace in the midst of despair. It makes no attempt to suggest solutions to the arms race.

I was reminded of Jesus weeping over Jerusalem. He noted the city's spiritual emptiness and foresaw its physical destruction saying, "Would that even today you knew the things that make for peace!" *The Day After* gives us a chance to see the ultimate effect if the church does not address this generation's spiritual darkness. While the movie ends in despair, I left with the sense that Christians must proclaim the "time of its visitation" to our earthly city lest it too be left with not one stone upon another. The church must proclaim the presence of the Prince of Peace in the midst of the world. The film only shows what may happen if we do not learn "the things that make for peace."

RESOURCES

For Conscience' Sake by Solomon Stucky (Herald Press, 1983) is a novel about three young Mennonite men in successive generations who, faced with war and conscription, have to make difficult decisions regarding their commitment to pacifism and non-resistance. It is published in quality paperback at $9.95 ($11.95 in Canada).

Several resources for peace education are available from Ingrid Rogers, 707 N. Sycamore St., North Manchester, IN 46962. **Swords Into Plowshares** is a collection of 27 plays on topics of peace and social justice. It is published by Brethren Press for $8.95. **Peace Be Unto You** is a cassette recording of new songs about historical and contemporary peace efforts and the biblical basis for peace and social justice. It is available from Rogers for $5. **Peace Be Unto You: A Songbook for Christian Peacemakers** contains 17 songs, with lyrics, melody line, guitar and piano accompaniment, and illustrations. Cost is $3.95. Add $1 for postage and handling.

Festive Breads of Christmas by Norma Jost Voth (Herald Press, 1983) is a collection of Christmas bread recipes from many countries, lovingly shared by friends, gathered from aunts, mothers and grandmothers. Voth's other gift/recipe books include **Peppernuts: Plain and Fancy** (1978), **Festive Breads of Easter** (1980), **Festive Cakes of Christmas** (1981) and **Festive Cookies of Christmas** (1982), all published by Herald Press. *Festive Breads of Christmas* is available for $3.25 ($3.90 in Canada).

A new cookbook of favorite recipes from Mennonite and Amish cooks is also a storybook. Memories connected to the recipes are shared side-by-side with tasty foods. **Cooking and Memories** by Phyllis Pellman Good features 20 cooks from across the Amish and Mennonite spectrum. It is published by Good Books, Intercourse, PA 17534.

Sooner or later, in almost any serious discussion about peace and war, someone is sure to ask the standard question: "What would you do if a criminal, say, pulled a gun and threatened to kill your wife (or daughter or sister or mother)"? This question is seriously addressed by Mennonite theologian John H. Yoder in his latest book, **What Would You Do?** (Herald Press, 1983). It is available in quality paperback for $6.95 ($8.35 in Canada).

Nativity gathers for the first time in one extra-size volume 40 classic paintings that depict the events surrounding Jesus' birth. It is available for $12.95 from Winston Press, 430 Oak Grove, Minneapolis, MN 55403.

Meditative Prayer by Richard J. Foster and **Unemployed** by Robert V. Thompson are two new booklets available from Inter-Varsity Press for 95¢ each.

Human Rights Theories in Christian Perspective by Paul Marshall is available for $2 from the Institute for Christian Studies, 229 College St., Toronto, ON M5T 1R4.

Now available from Mobilization for Survival is **Preventing Euroshima**, a 40-page organizer's guide for designing a local campaign against deployment of the cruise and Pershing II missiles in Europe. For copies at $3 each, or $2.25 each for 10 or more, write: MfS, 853 Broadway, Suite 2109, New York, NY 10003.

The first collection of personal conversion accounts to span all of Christian history, **Conversions** (Eerdmans, 1983) is a selection of writings in which 50 well-known Christians tell about their own conversion experiences. The hardback is available for $12.95.

MEDITATION

Who is the real enemy?

"For we are not fighting against human beings, but against the wicked spiritual forces in the heavenly world, the rulers, authorities and cosmic powers of this dark age" (Ephesians 6:12).

Latin America—1983. These words immediately evoke the names of the countries El Salvador, Guatemala, Nicaragua. The media have made us aware of the unrest, turmoil and threat of radical changes in Central America and of the threat these changes could mean for North America. The political insecurity in Central America threatens to extend its way both north and south, and it seems to force people to take sides. And in all this turmoil there is the church. Which side must the church take? Must the church take a side? Who is really the enemy of the church?

The refugees that have fled to southern Mexico—the majority of them innocent, hard-working, friendly Indians from the mountains of Guatemala—are confused. Who is their enemy? The government? The army? The guerrillas? The people that are trying to help them? The Mexican migration officials?

The newly formed inter-Mennonite Comite Mennonito De Auxilio—composed of members of the Old Colony, Reinlaender, General Conference, Kleingemeinde and Sommerfelder churches—sent two young men, Jacob Dyck from Campo 2B and Ernesto Ens, at present a student at CMBC, to take some material aid to the refugees. They too experienced confusion and had to discern the enemy. They were also treated as enemies at times.

The enemy lurks in every camp, in all political parties, and makes efforts to gain inroads into all church denominations and makes a concentrated attack on the church. Too often church institutions have been ready to label one political party as enemy. Paul reminds the Ephesians and us to be aware of who the real enemy is and asks us to arm ourselves with truth and justice and to be agents of peace. We need this armor to discern the enemy, who will sometimes appear as a pious friend.

This unrest, change and turmoil is also taking place in the Mennonite colonies in Mexico. Outside influences are corroding all isolation barriers. Different church groups are swooping down on them, trying to help them find the "right" way . . . or trying to increase their church membership. How shall these people, stepping out of the 16th into the 20th century, discern between friend and enemy? The armor of truth and justice, so essential for discernment, is hard to come by when there is ignorance of elementary truths and when even the church groups are vying among themselves for popularity and a larger sphere of influence. The enemy stops short of nothing. He will try to destroy the confidence between husband and wife, between friends, between church members, and he will set one church denomination at war against another. Bethlehem '83 showed us the way to unite, to discern gifts, to become aware of the different functions the "stones" have, to accept and respect our differences and to search for truth and justice together.

The church in Latin America and in the Mennonite colonies in Mexico needs to be able to discern the real enemy—Satan—and to fight him with the armor of truth and justice and to be a witness to peace in these troubled times.

Helen Ens

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The Great Commission is 2,000 years old, yet it is always new. Just like it is exciting to read in the Book of Acts how the early believers tried to carry the gospel to all the world, it is exciting to read how today's missionaries serve faithfully. It is especially gratifying to hear how God is raising up new churches all over the world. And they are ready to witness to us and with us who helped to get them started.

This issue is dedicated to learning from our spiritual brothers and sisters in Latin America. Thank you to Glendon Klaassen, Commission on Overseas Mission secretary for Latin America, for helping to assemble materials.

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EDITORIAL

Can North minister to South?

Henry W. Dueck

Missionary activity in our past moved basically from the North to the South. From centers of industrial power and wealth, Christianity was carried to underdeveloped areas. The cultural context of the "sender" was assumed superior to that of the "receiver." Implicit logic was that South must learn from North.

Church growth and theology. The last decades have shown helpful signs of change. Indigenous churches are growing spontaneously in the Third World. Traditional missionary use of the slogan "self-propagating, self-sustaining and self-governing" does not adequately describe this new reality.

These churches are dynamic in their own affairs and on the cutting edge of church/world issues. One such instance was experienced recently at Uppsala, Sweden, when 150 church leaders gathered to discuss peace and the nuclear threat. Third World church leaders insisted that justice be part of the agenda. They rightly argued that peace is never simply an absence of war. Peace, they said, fundamentally comes with justice—a pressing issue in the Third World. Biblically, they insisted, justice and peace belong together.

Outstanding theologians, leaders, evangelists and educators are emerging. They are doing new, vital and contextual theology. They are not always asking our questions nor finding our answers too helpful. Their questions burst from their culture, land and time. Our theological process reflects the time and thought of Augustine, Aquinas, Luther, etc., and is characterized by a concern to do theology in the context of philosophical and psychological postulates in order to explain and verify ultimate, abstract truth. Third World theology consciously tries to avoid this academic/dogmatic approach. Perhaps it is rightly called "contextual theology." The biblical text is accepted not only as reflecting the distant past or addressing the present in an abstract spiritual sense; the text is understood as speaking essentially to the present situation. This constant interaction between the present and the biblical text is described by some as the "hermeneutical circle." The questions and answers arising out of this dialogue, though often preliminary and tentative, respond to the hurt and hope of their present. This is real life, a situation the people daily feel and struggle with.

Ecumenical concerns. Third World churches have a new and different ecumenical awareness. Ecumenism in the North is an institution, a program or even a place (Geneva). Ecumenism in the South is relationships, mutual respect, learning. The above definition—perhaps too critical—signals trends and emphases. In the North we work with the urge to meet periodically in big assemblies—to maintain the status quo and to pat each other on the back, or to argue and disagree. Ecumenical experiences in the South occur without official structures. In some communities, home Bible study and prayer groups of Catholics and Protestants are emerging. In Montevideo, Catholics frequently participate in spiritual retreats, Bible studies and theological seminars with Mennonites. It has happened that Mennonites entering a Catholic worship service have been welcomed by the presiding priest as "our Mennonite brothers and sisters."

In these ecumenical experiences the focus is on the exalted, highest goal: Jesus Christ as Lord and the fellowship of our oneness in and through his Spirit.

Translations. Protestant missions have always been involved in translating devotional, doctrinal, liturgical materials and the Bible into the languages of the people. In Latin America, Spanish helps, though available, were not used because they were Catholic. It was assumed evangelical truth could come only from Protestant resources. Protestant translations of foreign materials proceeded on the idea that these would be of a timeless and universal nature. Contextual factors of the sending and receiving peoples were simply overlooked. Fortunately, today Latin American theologians are doing and writing theology. Educators are writing and educating in context. Liturgies and songs reflect South American life.

Those interested in missions should be unusually careful to listen to people. The Good News must be preached and lived with sensitive eyes, ears and hands. Today, the Lord of the kingdom invites both North and South to live out and enjoy our oneness in Christ because the barriers of separation have been broken down (Ephesians 2). He also instructs us to respect the diversity of his body and to use the variety of his gifts for our mutual support and growth (Ephesians 4).

THE MENNONITE

OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST 98:24 NOVEMBER 22, 1983

Help God visit the cities

Freeman J. Miller and Ronald J. Sider

The task of evangelizing cities is urgently upon us. The divine urge to "go and make disciples" includes vast metropolitan expanses often neglected by a society bent on "upward and outward mobility" while at the same time focusing on the "inner" self.

Today's cry of the cities will not be silenced. The evangelical church (and especially those of us from an Anabaptist heritage) has a century of urban homework to make up as we rediscover that throughout history God has a deep concern for urban masses. The pages of Scripture are full of the footprints of his messengers who lived and ministered there. We are realizing in a new way that the Great Commission clearly intends for us to begin "in Jerusalem."

We must admit several embarrassing facts. (This may be distasteful, but it is necessary for a clear self-identity and understanding as we pursue our goals.) *First*, Protestant churches must acknowledge that we (although allegedly possessing the "perfect love that casts out all fear") have often fled the cities in panic on the escalator to the suburbs as waves of immigrants or minorities moved into the vacuums left in the heart of our cities. The Roman Catholic Church had a commitment to a geographical parish and stayed to minister to the masses of newcomers. *Second*, from the start, we have espoused a deep anti-urban bias which still pervades our thinking today. Thomas Jefferson viewed the cities as being "pestilential to the morals, the health and the liberties of man." Today we often ask, "Can anything good come out of the city?" *Third*, modern evangelical mission movements have not been effective in urban settings. Donald McGavran, often called the father of the church growth

As Advent once again comes upon us, we need to realize that while this busy season creates joy and love for many, it also accentuates the loneliness of those who are neglected in the crowded cities.

movement, writes in *Understanding Church Growth*, "After 150 years of modern missions, the plain fact is that churches have not done well in most cities of Afericasia. The great movements to Christ have taken place among country people." *Fourth*, although Anabaptism was forged in fiery urban settings, its descendants have long since become the quiet in the land. We prefer to be peace churches through nonconfrontation and quietistic rural lifestyles. Persecution and conflict could not quench our original evangelistic zeal, but it finally drove us "underground," where we have remained all too comfortably.

We need not despair. The original Evangelist is still among us. He is Lord of history, including current urban history. He can help us forge a new application of his timeless Word to our current task (which is really all that theology is). We can embrace the urban challenge before us as a great gift from God for revitalizing the church. We can be messengers of hope to an urban world often filled with despair.

Historic Anabaptism offers a unique application of Christian principles. These may find fertile soil in today's urban populations, if courageously and knowledgeably applied. We suggest at least the following four broad categories as basic to an urban reformulation of Anabaptism.

1. **One posture.** Develop a more positive stance toward cities and urban life. We have been misled to believe that since the first biblical city was built by Cain, that since Sodom, Gomorrah and Babylon typify evil in some biblical passages and that since there is much wickedness and violence in cities today, God therefore abhors the cities. (We don't argue on the other hand that because the first murder occurred on a farm we should therefore avoid farming.) Life began in a garden, but it will culminate in a city—the "New Jerusalem, with all the nations streaming into and out of it" (Revelation 21:24). In fact, both the old and new Jerusalem seem to reveal God's paradigm for urban life: many people living in loving proximity and peace, where righteousness is practiced, and where blessings flow not only to those within the walls but to and from the surrounding countryside as well (Psalm 72:16; Zechariah 8:1-8; Jeremiah 29:1-7; Revelation 21). Cities are the result of human nature. We are a gregarious people created by a gregarious God. We were *made* to live together as neighbors, brothers and sisters just as we are also made to keep and cultivate the earth. City and country can live in a happy symbiotic relationship, *both* living out God's ideals and enjoying his blessings.

The divine urge, implanted deeply in every person, finds its best expression in agape love. Agape love must govern our actions and our attitudes. The Anabaptists talked much of the rule of Christ, which is the rule of love (John 15). God loved the world (including its cities) enough to sacrifice an only Son. He would have saved Sodom and Gomorrah for 10 righteous people, and *did* save the entire city of Nineveh because he loved it more than did his messenger Jonah. (He too may have suffered from an anti-urban bias.) Jesus wept over Jerusalem, and Paul loved the cities so much that he made them the focus of his missionary life. We tend to focus on the problems; they focused on the *people* to be redeemed.

We must recapture the divine urge to go into *all* the world—compelled by the love of Christ. In our evangelism, whether at home or abroad, we need to take one posture toward all people everywhere—love and reconciliation. When the Swiss Anabaptist George Blaurock faced expulsion from his native city of Zurich during the Reformation, he protested he would rather die than leave his city. He quoted Psalm 24:1, "The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof," in his defense. We need to recapture Blaurock's theology of place and see the city as one important place for living out kingdom values. Otherwise we can become hit-and-run evangelists, proclaiming to the cities, "God loves you, but we don't." And our lives may suggest a limited gospel: "God can save you, but not here."

Holding the city in positive regard means we exegete the city as well as the Bible. We study, examine and pray for it, learning all we can about urban dynamics and social systems in order to understand the systemic evils which oppress people. We will discover from within how systems of injustice and violence create poverty. We will discover that sin is personal and structural. The poor are not primarily poor because of personal mistakes or sins like alcoholism, adultery and the like (although that is true of some poor people). Many are poor because the educational system, the housing structures and employment procedures are simply not fair. The people of God will commit themselves to changing such structures.

The love of God is intended for the highrise apartment dwellers as surely as it is for those who live in the rural areas.

This positive posturing toward the city is an essential first step toward reclaiming it for Christ. We cannot serve those we do not love and understand.

2. **One God.** Recover the lofty monotheism of Israel's prophets, which says we will have no other gods but Yahweh—the creator and sustainer of the universe, the Father of Jesus Christ who is Lord of lords and King of kings. Jesus came announcing a kingdom. We are already living in that kingdom and subject to the King and his principles. Our first allegiance is to Christ. We must decide our ethics and lifestyles by his teachings. While the kingdom of God has already been inaugurated, it has not yet been fully realized. It will be consummated after Christ returns, but meanwhile we are caught in the tension between the kingdom of light and the kingdom of darkness.

In the constant tension of living in the already-but-not-yet kingdom, many of our acts will be perceived as political, just as were circumcision and prophecy in the Old Testament and baptism in the New (also among the early Anabaptists). When we declare our first loyalty to a power higher than the principalities and powers, we precipitate conflict. Kingdom principles often run directly counter to those prevailing in society. Therefore, when we work for peace and justice in the name of Christ we encounter resistance from those who promote greed and warfare in the name of earthly powers.

Like the early Anabaptists, the urban church must openly declare that it serves only one God and lives unashamedly by his book, the Bible, as the ultimate authority for faith and life. That declaration, if consistently lived up to, will inevitably be seen as political, for it means the church will live respectfully as good citizens under earthly rulers but will uncompromisingly "obey God rather than men" where human law contradicts divine law.

The church will seek the total welfare—spiritual, social, economic and psychological—of urban people; but that does not mean we lose the evangelistic passion for leading individuals into a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. The most complete, most permanent alleviation of crime, poverty, oppression and injustice happens as people are reconciled to God and to each other, and form communities of the new humanity in Christ.

3. **One model.** The incarnation of Christ will become the central model for all urban ministry and church life. Jesus said, "As the Father has sent me, so send I you" (John 20:21). Paul tells us in Philippians 2 that we are to have the same mind (attitude) which Jesus had. "What would Jesus do?" will not be an empty, hollow slogan chanted glibly on Sunday morning, but will be the most serious question the urban church can ask in every circumstance it faces. The church, his body, continues in a special sense the physical presence and work of Christ on earth today. That is the purpose of the church, to be his presence and to carry on his work. Through the power of the Holy Spirit the church will do "even greater works," Christ said (John 14:12).

The incarnation is a powerful model for shaping the life and ministry of the urban church. Jesus did not cling selfishly to his rights and possessions but emptied himself and for our sakes became poor to make us rich (2 Corinthians 8:9). Just as he became one with us, so we too can become one with the urban masses, rediscovering along with them how to live out the abundant life under modern conditions. As we move in among the urban populations we can work and pray for their *shalom*—as the Hebrew exiles did in Babylon—and in their shalom find our own shalom (Jeremish 29:7). By "losing our lives" with Christ in the city, we will find them. The church will move into (rather than flee from) the troubled hearts of our cities because Jesus went where the troubled people were.

Since Christ dealt with people's spirits or souls and with their hunger, disease and imprisonment, we will also practice wholistic ministry. We too will refuse to use violence, to amass wealth selfishly, to yield easily to the mores of society or to discriminate against anyone. The example of Jesus is still the primary example for us.

4. **One people.** Incarnation is the model and reconciliation is the message of the urban church. The reconciled community is the result. Perhaps this is the area where Anabaptism can offer the most distinctive answer to the brokenness and alienation of city dwellers. As in New Testament times, when the gospel is faithfully proclaimed and lived, it threatens to turn entire cities upside down. Instead of throngs of jostling, grabbing, fighting people, communities of grace, peace, hope and joy emerge to express genuine love and care. Former enemies embrace. Where there was only rivalry, now there is cooperation.

The church consists of visible groups of redeemed people living out kingdom ethics. Wherever the gospel is faithfully proclaimed and lived, it creates "kingdom clusters"—people who are drawn together because of their common Lord and their new life in him. This is one of the surest marks of the kingdom—the emerging new community. From the moment Jesus called his first disciples, he began a new movement which drew together diverse people and miraculously created a new unity among them. Racial, economic and social barriers came down.

The kingdom cluster becomes the key vehicle for evangelism and church growth in cities today. Instead of sending solo-hero evangelists to conquer the urban frontiers (a strategy modeled on individualism and the pioneer spirit), we should seriously consider sending clusters of people to move into selected areas of the city to both proclaim and demonstrate wholistic Christian community in that place. It becomes a micro-community incarnating the life of Christ within the macro-community. The quality of this common life draws people into Christ's family.

A cluster has many advantages over an individual evangelist. Members can support and encourage each other. If most work, that can release one or two members for full-time community evangelism. Professionals in the cluster can offer services, often in under-served areas, and train youth for similar professions. Business people can begin businesses and create employment for the unemployed. Builders can help restore deteriorating housing and work with neighbors for self-help in housing. Teachers can penetrate the school system. The Christian cluster can work in solidarity with the larger neighborhood for justice, peace and improved living conditions. As neighbors come to faith in Christ, they can fit into an existing faith community and find all areas of their lives touched by God through his people seven days a week.

As clusters grow spiritually and numerically, they can send out new clusters to other areas of the city and form a "kingdom network" which eventually impacts the entire city. As in the New Testament, wherever transformed groups meet—in houses, churches, the marketplaces, palaces, or before governors and judges—they create a stir of excitement by modeling alternatives to social norms and demonstrating a power that is authoritative, authentic and convincing.

Each community can offer worship, fellowship and mutual aid—providing stability in transient neighborhoods. But the total network can provide channels of mobility—thus permitting the church to adapt to a real factor in urbanized society (mobility) with integrity. A more just distribution of resources might be a natural byproduct. Healthy churches already exist in the city, but often they are small and independent, not tied into larger networks reaching beyond their immediate neighborhood.

Modern Anabaptists have learned how to become servants individually but we need to find ways of serving our cities corporately. This may well mean forming new investment groups and tying in intentionally with big business and real estate downtown for the purpose of reaping some of the generous profits for kingdom purposes—to benefit the entire city rather than simply make individuals richer and richer. The urban Anabaptist will say, "I cannot win the city by myself any more than I can live out the gospel by myself."

Certainly we do not expect to bring in the millennium by our hard work. That will happen only when Christ returns. But significant change can happen now. We should not run and hide in the hills, waiting for his return. There are still Ninevehs which will repent if prophets dare to confront them. *A Meetinghouse article* •

Virginia Mollenkott will address Perspective '84

building a new creation: partners in hope

PERSPECTIVE '84

Perspective '84, the General Conference sponsored gathering of young adults to explore our partnership with God in a ministry of reconciliation, is scheduled for Feb. 16-19, 1984, in Minneapolis. Keynote speaker for Perspective '84 is Virginia Mollenkott. Two members of the planning committee, Al Beitler and Lynn Keenan, interviewed Virginia for The Mennonite.

Keenan/Beitler: Certain experiences in our lives alter and deepen our theological perspectives. Would you share with us two or three crossroads or experiences which, as you look back, have been central to shaping your theological understanding?

Mollenkott: When I hear the word crossroads I think of a sudden or catastrophic change. Things happen for me very gradually. I have to understand what I'm doing before I do it. I have to think about the theological basis first, so there tends to be a slow development.

Initially came a gradual realization that I was secondary to my brother. He was expected to become a Christian leader and I was not. We were Plymouth Brethren. In the worship service there is the understanding, similar to a Quaker meeting, that anyone led by the Holy Spirit will speak. But Plymouth Brethren women know they can't possibly be led by the Holy Spirit; their silence is dictated by church policies. Desiring to fully serve the church, I dreamed of being a missionary. I knew that on the mission field women could do all things because men didn't want to.

My mother used to tell me she wasn't at all sure if there'd be any money for me to go to college. There was never any question that it would be there for my brother. My response was, I'm going to college whether there is money or not. As it turned out, she did support me through Bob Jones University. Throughout my high school education (I went to a Christian high school) I was told I tried too hard and that the idea was to make oneself look good. "Have a good image but don't be so serious about being a Christian." I was confused, but I could see that the people who were faking it were getting along a lot better with the administration. At Bob Jones the people who were willing to betray others were the ones who got along best. And so I had to sort out what is Christ and what are Christians.

In my graduate education I was drawn toward Christian humanism. The writers I was attracted to were Christian humanists—Chaucer, Milton, Donne and George Herbert. I perceived Christian humanism as the way of life for me—a way of life which says that affirming humankind is a way of affirming the divine. You do not glorify the Creator by debunking the creature, which is what I had heard in my upbringing. This was for me a widening understanding of the family of God.

I think there's a huge difference between secular humanism and Christian humanism. Secular humanism makes humankind into God. I think we do have divine qualities but it is a tremendous mistake to assume that I am God because God is in me and God empowers and supports my being. That's not the same thing as being God.

K/B: What originally drew you to the church?

M: It's not the church. It's Christ. What I knew about the life of Jesus so completely drew me to this figure that

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no amount of battering could keep me from him. I was able to make a distinction between Christ and those who said they were Christ's followers.

K/B: Your writings and public addresses are often of a somewhat prophetic nature, critiquing the church, calling us to recognize the bigotry, patriarchy, pride and self-preoccupation which color many of the patterns we move in, much of the way we touch people. In your awareness of these blind spots plaguing the church, what keeps you committed to the church? What is (are) your source(s) of hope for the church?

M: I've spoken now to nearly every denominational group. And I listen to people wherever I go. Our troubles are astonishingly similar. Churches are all patriarchal to one degree or another. Outsiders are very outside and very crushed—Third World people, women, gays, handicapped, old people. That's the problem, and if I'm critical it's because this is my family. The fact of the matter is, if you're going to be associated with Christ's body on earth you're going to associate with a pock-marked body. I believe the promises in Scripture. I believe the Scriptures tell us what God's intentions are and I believe they will happen. I really believe that I am an actor in a divine comedy. I might make my exit before the happy ending occurs, but it's going to be a happy ending. If Ephesians 1 says that God's intention is to bring all things within the aegis of Christ, then that will happen. To be in Christ means that there is no racism and no sexism any more. That will happen. So I will do my part toward it and it's really up to God exactly how it will happen. I feel sublimely confident that sooner or later it is going to come out exactly the way Scripture says. Justice is going to roll down.

K/B: The biblical theme for Perspective '84 (2 Corinthians 5:17-20) indicates God has enabled us to be co-creators with him. Partnership is contrary to our tendency to see God solely in control and thus absolve ourselves of all responsibility to work out the way God desires things to be.

M: That's right. We're talking about that old cleavage between transcendence and immanence. Classical theology stressed transcendence and caused people to be unconcerned about injustice. If you stress immanence totally, then God is only within the creation and nowhere else; you're going to try to bring about justice and you're going to meet all these blank walls and after a while you're going to burn out. That's where transcendence comes in. Here comes the realization that within and yet above and beneath and alongside your efforts there is a power, much greater than any human being, solving the situation.

I'm impressed that God has limited God's self. Genesis 1 clearly tells us that God limited God's self and said that the control of this world is up to you—male and female. The human race did take control. So if we don't like the world we live in, we know who to thank. Our world situation is the result of some bad choices, but God gave us the power to choose and we continue to have that power. We have more and horrific power because we have more technology.

K/B: Understanding God as a loving partner with us is so freeing and such a wonderful theme. It's a responsibility/opportunity teeter totter type of thing. But it's like you say, the dream is bigger than each of us; it's God's dream.

M: We really are responsible to go for healing, for wholeness, for the full use and development of all our gifts because we're denying God's embodiment if we

We believe Perspective '84 can help young adults find their way in the maze of challenges and opportunities that confront them in today's world.

don't develop our gifts. But if you think that you single-handedly must bring in the kingdom (which I prefer to call the realm of God) then you will say yes to everything and that can become a mask for ego and a mask for perfectionism. You can soon have a breakdown. That is, again, where the transcendence comes in.

K/B: And also the reality that we are in partnership with the entire church as well as with God, that that whole pool of gifts and personalities are meant to do the work of realizing the dream.

M: Oh yes, we can't do everything. There are many, many members of the body. Some of them are a lot better at a lot of things than I.

K/B: What implications does God's inclusiveness—God's sharing of power and partnership with humanity—have for us as we determine how we will live our lives, make decisions and minister?

M: The 2 Corinthians passage is a perfect way to talk about it. If I exclude people, then people who know me as the only Christian in their lives have to conclude that Christ excludes people.

K/B: Certainly many Christians who exclude people think that Christ excludes people.

M: Then they haven't taken a good look at how often Christ caught heavy flack for being with sinners and other "bad characters," as one version phrases it. When you get right down to it, why was he crucified?

"Our God is a jealous God." I understand that now to mean because God is in every creature, God is jealous when we cut off any creature from the basic goodness of life and the necessities of life, from enough to eat, a place to sleep, love, dignity, self-respect and, if they want to be in the church—first-class citizenship in the church. When these are cut off from any creature, God is angry.

Ephesians 4 tells us we are supposed to grow up into the head, into the Christ. It's because we have bought into patriarchy, which is a hierarchical system of power, that we've exalted those images of God as potentate, jealous of keeping all power to God's self. That's not the God of the Bible. The whole idea of being divine is that you give away your power.

K/B: Ephesians 4 is a controversial passage on headship, particularly as it pertains to marriage.

M: Just prior to addressing the issue of Christian marriage, Paul calls the church to grow into the head, into the Christ—again, the whole idea of the divine sharing of power. This is what Paul meant, I'm sure: "Husbands, the world gives you power. Use it to serve your wives. As they serve you in response, you'll have mutuality." Society makes it tough for Christian husbands who want to be Christlike. They get called names. Whereas women are expected to be servants, men in our society are supposed to be macho. If they aren't, they're called pantywaists.

K/B: What do you see as two or three of the most encouraging developments in the church in the last 10 years?

M: One of them for me—coming from the fundamentalist/evangelical wing—is the awakening of social conscience in the lives of some of us who have been avidly Bible and theology oriented—spiritual in kind of a disembodied way. I suppose pietistic could be the word for it.

Equally encouraging for me is that many of the churches—who have been completely social activitst—are showing interest in theology and Bible study. So there is kind of a coming together of those who have been social activists over here—the liberals—and over here the more justice-oriented among the right-wing conservatives. There is a church within the church where these things are being fused.

K/B: Will you say more about the fusing of these two elements? As we plan and talk about Perspective '84 we're cautious that it not be an opportunity to produce more theological academicians. How can Perspective '84 move beyond a group of educated Americans and Canadians to touch the homeless in cities across the continent, the tortured in El Salvador, nuclear proliferation, etc.?

M: You say you want activists instead of academicians. I would say you need both. They need to become keenly aware of how to study and know the importance of the Bible and all aspects of human culture in relation to Scripture so that they have a firm basis for what they do. The Bible is our authority. It's empowering to have that type of rock and fortress.

When talking about moving from the head knowledge to action, a key is to take responsibility for one's own power. As God's child I *am* the Christ in the world today. I have God's power at my disposal; it is my job to listen to the Holy Spirit and work hard at whatever I am told to do. •

Can I borrow money from you?

Calvin Redekop

A friend called and shared a financial problem. He had been turned down by his banker for an extension of his credit because the business was too unorthodox and unconventional. "Too risky," the banker had said. My friend then approached some of his church friends, who all seemed suddenly tight on funds. "I guess you find out who your friends are," he said bitterly. He continued, "If the business or investment is safe and conventional and the return is guaranteed and high, they have all kinds of money."

This encounter has no doubt been rehearsed in many times and places since money was first exchanged. And it has been extra sticky for Christians. Included among the issues raised are questions like: (1) Is it right for Christians to borrow, or should one engage in businesses only with one's own equity? (2) Is the inability to borrow money from banks or friends a sign that the venture should not be tried? (3) What responsibility do fellow Christians have to loan money to others? (4) What should Christians do with their surplus cash? (5) Is it fair to assume that the person with lots of resources always is the most competent and authoritative in economic and financial matters?

I will answer the easiest first and avoid the tough ones as cleverly as I can. Number 5 is easy and the answer is no. The institution of inheritance guarantees that competence will not always be matched by wealth, although several generations tend to even out the differences. There is no one-to-one correlation between wealth and competence—inheritance, luck, having good friends, and even good old-fashioned stinginess help people amass wealth.

Question 4 is more complex and problematical. I choose to pass over this question and simply urge you to consult the Bible yourself. You might start with Matthew 6 and follow up on other passages which cross reference on the theme.

Question 3 is the one my friend was really concerned about and is the one that has caused lots of hostility among Christians. Are Christians not to help each other in all matters, including financial and business? Of course they are, if Christian fellowship (*koinonia*) means anything. But as my friend said, often Christian fellowship "softens" when money is involved. When it comes down to cold hard cash, we are all hard nosed. Money is such an alienating force that many people never borrow from fellow Christians. Closely knit Christian families have had terrible estrangement because of disagreements on money. Even Paul was leery and said, "Owe no man anything but to love one another" (Romans 13:8).

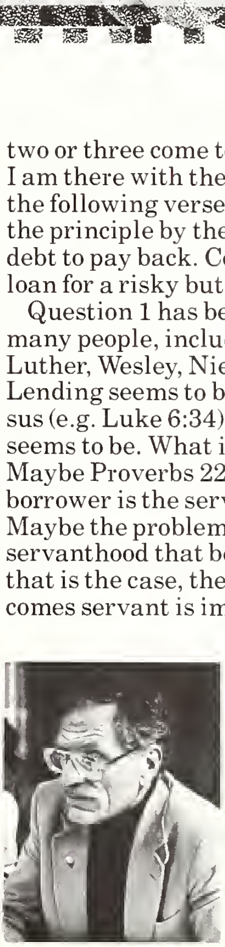
But what if I believe in my business venture? What if it is a noble Christian business and I need money? Even worse, what if I am in trouble and need cash (lots of it) to get me out of a bind or even possible bankruptcy? What does the Bible tell us about borrowing and lending?

There is a simple answer to financial ventures. Take the Bible literally and do what Jesus told the rich young ruler in Mark 10:21. Give it all away and get out of business. If that is too heavy, try the opposite extreme and never borrow or lend—*pay as you go.* (I had a relative who did just that and became very well-to-do, thank you. But he left fewer friends than sections of land when he died.) But besides the unattractiveness of this individualistic self-help stance, it does not seem to jibe with the biblical message on sharing and mutuality.

When a bank no longer is adequate for a Christian's financial needs, the only biblical alternative I see is a collection of Christian brothers and sisters concerned about sharing money and care—a Christian credit union. If after requisite economic and other sharing and education this group can't help, then maybe one should not be in the business nor should one be borrowing. What we need most is candor in our business affairs.

That is what I tried to tell my friend who is still looking for money. I am waiting with suspense to see what the others will say. Matthew 18 does not exclude financial matters when it says, "Where two or three come together in my name, I am there with them." Interestingly, in the following verses Jesus illustrates the principle by the servant who had a debt to pay back. Could it have been a loan for a risky but Christian venture?

Question 1 has been spoken to by many people, including Aquinas, Luther, Wesley, Niebuhr and others. Lending seems to be no problem for Jesus (e.g. Luke 6:34). But borrowing seems to be. What is the difference? Maybe Proverbs 22:7 has a clue, ". . . the borrower is the servant of the lender." Maybe the problem is the involuntary servanthood that borrowing creates. If that is the case, then to whom one becomes servant is important.



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Pop goes the church—1

Peter Letkemann

One of the most significant developments in church music in the last two decades has been the introduction of jazz, blues, rock, country, folk and other popular styles of music into the witness and worship of the church. This has generated a vigorous and ongoing controversy between opponents and proponents of this so-called "contemporary Christian music."

At the heart of the controversy is the question of what constitutes the nature of "true church music," a question which has troubled church musicians and ecclesiastical officials since at least the 4th century A.D.

More specifically, it is a question of content and style, of what is said, and how it is communicated. Can these popular styles of music be used to communicate the message of the gospel?

Opponents say no. They maintain that music heard in the church must be something different from what is heard elsewhere. It must be a sacred music; "there should be a definite association of music used in our churches with spiritual things" (cited by Robert Mitchell, *Ministry and Music*, p. 130). They associate popular music with everything but spiritual things.

Opposition to the use of rock styles by Christians has been especially vehement. Opponents view rock music as "rough music, dealing with the lower side of human nature. It creates an unhealthy mental environment for its listeners through suggestive lyrics and obscene connotations. Rock excites a person's sexual drives and projects an atmosphere where immorality is acceptable" (cited by Steve Lawhead, *Rock Reconsidered*, p. 72).

Richard D. Mountford has responded to this criticism in an article entitled, "Does the Music Make Them Do It?" (*Christianity Today*, May 4, 1979). He cites various studies which show that rock music "could have its effect only if the person desired to let it affect him" and that "the only clearly negative effect that has been found for those listening to rock music has been in inner-ear damage due to excessive volume associated with rock music."

People who object to the use of popular music styles in the church on the basis of negative associations which they bring to the music may be compared to the Christians described by Paul in Romans 14 or 1 Corinthians 8. These people refused to eat meat because of its associations with idol worship. Paul's faith was strong enough not to be bothered by this association, but he did not criticize his weaker brethren for their viewpoint. Rather, he showed a deep pastoral concern for them, and encouraged the strong, for whom the eating of meat offered to idols was not a problem, to have regard for the weak. "Let us no more pass judgment on one another, but rather decide never to put a stumbling block or hindrance in the way of a brother" (Romans 14:13).

A variety of different musical styles have been introduced to the church recently.

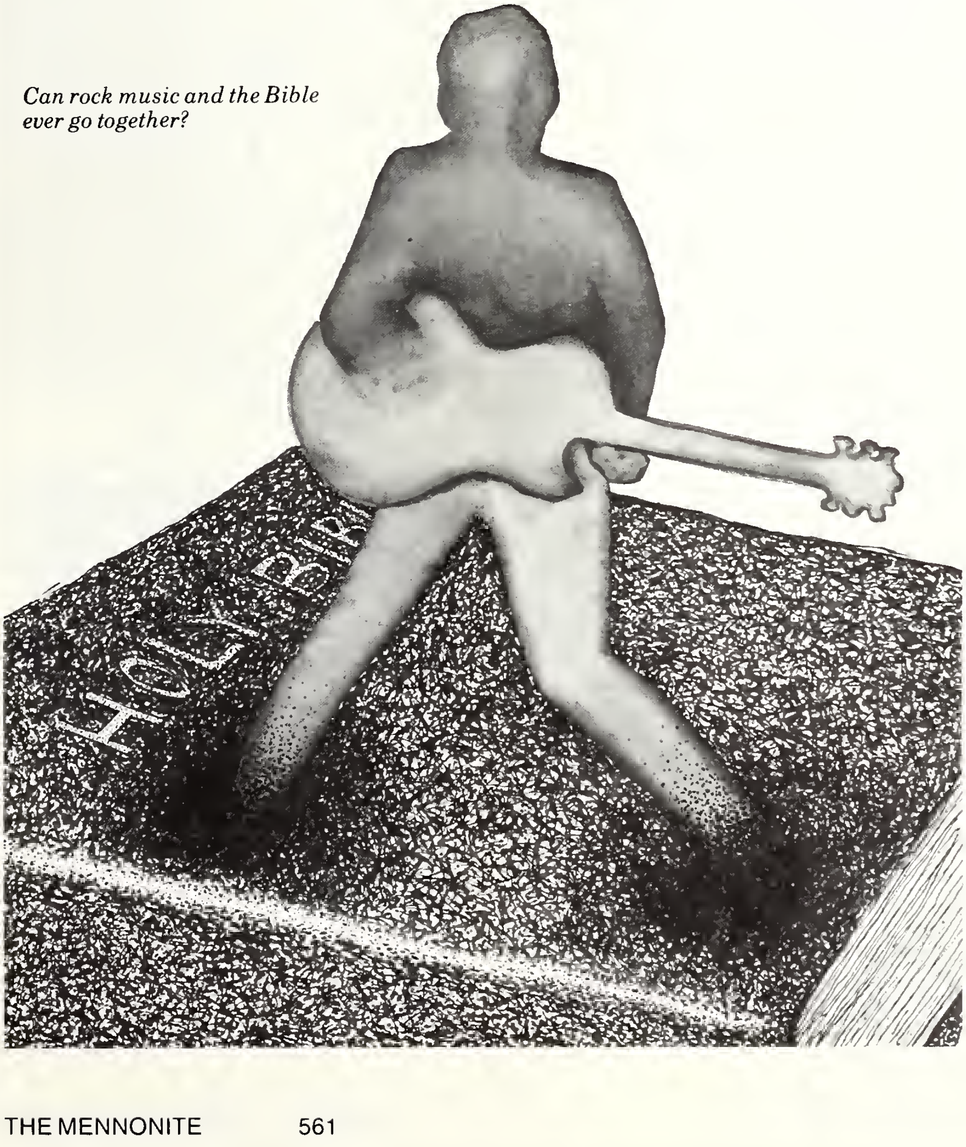
Richard Mountford shares a modern example of this. "I have talked with persons who were heavy drug users, and after conversion they had to quit listening to rock music, even the rock music in some churches, because of the associations it had for them. We must separate ourselves from musical signals, or any other kind of signal that tends to produce conditioned responses in us that are not Christian, until we have been freed from the associations these signals bring to mind" (*op. cit.*).

Christians who support the use of popular music styles in the church recognize that such negative associations may exist in the mind of certain people. They assert, however, that such associations are not inherent to the style of the music itself and thus see no reason why such styles cannot be used.

A study of music history affirms this assertion. For centuries the church has borrowed from the secular styles of its day; in each generation there have been skilled and dedicated Christian musicians who have taken these popular secular styles and appropriated them for use in the church. Succeeding generations have lost any negative associations which might have been attached to this music and have come to consider it as sacred music. An example is the familiar chorale melody to "O Sacred Head Now Wounded," which originally belonged to a secular love song.

Proponents of contemporary Christian music argue that in spite of some negative associations, this music remains a useful tool for evangelism. Their reasoning goes as follows: (1) the gospel must be presented to people in a language they understand; (2) the various styles of popular music speak a language which is familiar to a large sector of the population; (3) therefore the use of such familiar styles of popular music, filled with Christian content, will be an aid in communicating the gospel to these people.

Such a utilitarian view of music has its dangers. As Donald P. Ellsworth has said, "It is apparent . . . that to a great number of musical evangelists the musical quality does not matter much as long as the job of communication and witness is accomplished" (*Christian Music in Contemporary Witness*, p. 158). I have heard Christian young people say they prefer secular rock over Christian rock because of the superior quality of the music and the musicians. Without wanting to be judgmental, Ellsworth says ". . . it has seemed that some groups pretend to be evangelistic simply because they are not able to succeed in the world of secular entertainment . . . quite often the [Christian] audience is less demanding as far as excellence is concerned" (pp. 127-128).



Can rock music and the Bible ever go together?

These are not arguments against the use of Christian "pop." They are a challenge to Christian musicians to be as good, if not better, musically as their secular counterparts.

Objections to the use of popular music styles by Christians on the basis of style alone cannot be sustained. My personal objection to much of the contemporary Christian music I have heard has to do rather with its content.

I share the view of Ellsworth when he says, "The new [Christian] music may help recruit, but it does not help the singer [or listener] mature musically or spiritually" (p. 196). Most of the songs with which I am familiar emphasize personal Christian experience at the expense of discipleship and other biblical themes. The songs communicate the singer's own experience of the love and happiness found in Jesus and invite the listeners to find this experience for themselves by accepting Jesus. The emphasis on a deep and personal acceptance of Jesus as Lord is certainly not to be faulted. But this initial step of faith must be followed by others. The Christian must grow and mature, moving from spiritual milk to solid food (Hebrews 5:11-14). Too much contemporary Christian music seems satisfied to stay at the same "Jesus and me" level of Christian experience.

An examination of the texts of songs by artists such as the Imperials, Evie, Barry McQuire, 2nd Chapter of Acts, Larry Norman and others reveals a neglect of many important biblical themes: covenant faithfulness and the importance of the church as a fellowship of believers, justice for the oppressed, concern for the poor. Surprisingly few of these songs actually use scriptural texts.

Again, this is not an argument against the Christian use of popular styles. It is a challenge to writers, composers and performers of this music to reach for the Scriptures and set them to music; to grow and mature in their faith and let their songs reflect this growth. *First in a two-part series*

Intervention, violence, horror are themes at Centra

Chicago (Meetinghouse)—More than 80 people, including Christians from Guatemala, Nicaragua, Honduras, El Salvador, Philippines, Canada and the United States, were together at a symposium here on "Anabaptism, Oppression and Liberation in Central America" Oct. 15-17.

Sponsored by the Mennonite Central Committee Peace Section, the aims were to interpret the Central American situation, give Mennonite workers there a chance to share their experiences, hear workers from other churches in that region and help Mennonites in Canada and the United States gain better insights for appropriate responses to events there.

The sessions were like a Bach fugue: variations on a similar theme.

The first theme was intervention in the name of protection. *U.S. News and World Report*, Oct. 17, says, "Since the mid-19th century, the U.S. has intervened militarily more than 60 times in Central America, Mexico and the Caribbean" (p. 38). President Reagan repeatedly claims that U.S. overt and covert operations there are strictly to defend against Cuban- and Soviet-supported action, to save that region from communism. In Nicaragua the United States is backing *contras* to destabilize a leftist-leaning Sandinista government which in 1979 toppled the pro-U.S. Somoza dynasty.

El Salvador is the focus of U.S. anti-Marxist strategy in the area. While many Latins allege U.S. complicity in the military coup of 1979 against General Romero, this is denied. The U.S. target here is the leftist guerrilla campaign against the rightist military regime. Supposedly fighting a maximum of 6,000 guerrillas, the United States pledged $110 million in military aid and says it has 55 "advisers" in El Salvador. Unrest in the country has generated over a million refugees, of which 500,000 are illegally and ironically in the United States, subject to deportation and almost sure torture and/or death if captured. Since 1980 the U.S. government has captured and returned over 35,000 refugees to El Salvador.

When General Efrain Rios Montt took over Guatemala in 1982, many evangelical Christians, along with the U.S. government, saw it as the hand of God. Montt, a born-again believer, brought about some reforms. But he soon set up civil self-defense patrols, with U.S. support, to war against subversives. Amnesty International reported that by Oct. 10, 1982, 2,600 people had been assassinated since Montt came to power. One commentator said Rios Montt changed Guatemala from a state of terror to a state of fear.

On Aug. 8, 1983, a coup replaced Montt with Mejia-Victores, the former minister of defense. U.S. aid to Guatemala is promised to increase because of a better human rights record, but the killings continue (over 60 assassinations were reported in September).

Costa Rica, known traditionally as a pacifistic democracy, does not have a conventional army, but *U.S. News and World Report* (Oct. 17, p. 37) says it has 7,000 troops. A North America military mission does function there, and U.S. pressure has generated regular ferrying of U.S. planes and helicopters carrying arms into Costa Rica. In the refugee camps, violence and torture have also been happening.

Honduras presently receives the most direct aid from the United States. With 5,000 Marines, new airfields and radar installations have made it the newest, most obvious platform for U.S. intervention in Central America. Here the United States trains Salvadorans to fight the Sandinistas. In spite of electing a civilian government and president in 1981, military dominance remains obvious.

Idle lands, dispossessed and disenfranchised peoples abound in most of Central America. Literacy is low, and in Guatemala half the infants die before age five. Because of obviously mixed motives for U.S. intervention, there is a growing resentment toward those who want to liberate them. The poor majority feels especially hopeless about the situation. Only the already wealthy power brokers seem to benefit from U.S. aid in all its forms.

The second theme was violence without justice. Hugo Zorilla, now a New Testament professor at Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary in Fresno, Calif., but formerly professor at Latin American Theological Seminary in San Jose, Costa Rica, told the symposium,

CENTRAL AMERICA
Mexico
Belize
Guatemala
Honduras
El Salvador
Nicaragua
PACIFIC OCEAN
CARIBBEAN SEA
Costa Rica
Panama

Map by Jim King

America symposium

"Central America is five nations who are not resigned to live in violence but are under the snare of the North Atlantic countries." Daniel Jensen, now of New York but formerly of Guatemala, told the group that the assassination in El Salvador of Archbishop Romero in March 1980, the assassinations in El Salvador of the four Catholic sisters in December 1980 and the assassinations of one priest, one lay brother and one Mennonite in Guatemala have never been cleared up. Justice today is a stranger in Central America.

Prevalance of death and horror was the third theme. Archbishop Romero was killed as he was serving mass. When a group of people went to the embassy in Guatemala City for a meeting, 38 were burned to death for protesting, reported a former Reformed Church worker who witnessed this event. He also told of meeting a woman who had gone insane after seeing her entire family taken away and killed. Each worker at the symposium who had spent time there told of horrors unimaginable in a civilized world.

Zorilla said he has not seen a significant difference among the churches in the region. Most are anti-communist and pro-U.S. But there are foreign workers and native believers (especially among the dispossessed Indian groups) who are in a remarkable way catching the meaning of Jesus and ready to become martyrs for him.

Cesar del Aguila (left), a Guatemalan Mennonite, Ron Collins (center), Goshen, Ind., and Gilberto Flores, Guatemalan Mennonite pastor, work on proper translation of one of the papers presented at the symposium.

Salvadoran peasants dig a mass grave.

In some countries the Basic Ecclesiastical Communities are arising from the grass roots through intense study of the Bible. They weep together, pray together, sing, fast and study together—irrespective of denominational affiliation—and then go out to be the body of Christ in their various communities. They try to remain true to their own churches but also actively participate in local cooperatives and other social improvement projects. For this they are generally considered subversives and their lives often hang by thin threads.

North American reponse was a fourth theme. At times the majority of eyes at the symposium were moist with tears. Feelings of pain were reflected in awkward silences. There were uneasy feelings of complicity in the dilemma.

A Guatemalan Mennonite pastor gave this advice: Take all the gringos out of Central America—both Christian and military. Let us build our own country. And let our churches together with mission board leaders decide upon the missionaries needed. Mennonites in all churches must become more active and less passive. Mennonite Christians must feel the pain of the oppressed—identify with the poor whom Jesus pronounced "blessed." Mennonites in Canada and the United States must first become more prophetic at home, then help us be prophetic in Central America. Mission boards must allow us to work on a theology that fits our situation.

Comparisons of U.S. and Soviet involvements were presented by Tim Traimin, who works in a Toronto Jesuit Center for Faith and Justice. He concluded, "U.S. intervention is quantitatively and qualitatively different from Soviet intervention. It is more significant and more unjustifiable." Traimin then urged active influence upon Canadian and U.S. policies in Central America.

MCC and mission boards are active there in ministry to refugees, church leadership training, evangelization, development, and aiding victims of wars and counterrevolutionary attacks.

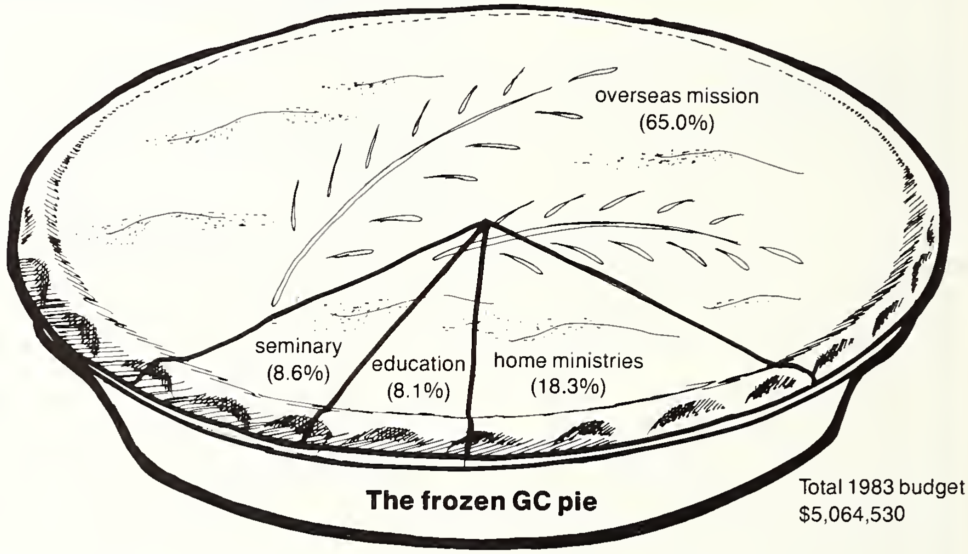
Dan Zehr, principal of Elim Bible Institute, Altona, Man., and former MCC worker in Bolivia, concluded the symposium with a meditation on Revelation 12. Here Satan's forces are defeated with three resources: the blood of Christ (personal salvation), telling the world (a declaration of the kingdom of God as first priority) and not loving our lives even unto death (readiness to dedicate our total selves in service for others).
Bernie Wiebe

In the course of closing the financial books for Bethlehem '83 some incomplete records were found. If some Bethlehem registrants are aware of money still owed, an immediate payment would be appreciated. Also if a refund is in order, please contact the Mennonite Church General Board office: Bethlehem '83, 528 E. Madison St., Lombard, IL 60148.

To encourage and promote the development of video production skills among students of communication arts, the Media Division of the Commission on Home Ministries has created the Mennonite Video Arts Award. The $500 prize will be awarded to a Mennonite or Church of the Brethren college student. Video productions of 10-30 minutes may be submitted on video cassette tape and will be screened by a panel of communication professionals. Deadline for entries is May 31, 1984. For more information contact Media Division, Box 370, Elkhart, IN 46515.

"Coping with Criticism in the Church," a workshop presented nationally to secretaries, clergy, military chaplains and health-care professionals, will be presented Dec. 5 at Prairie View Mental Health Center, Newton, Kan. James Allen Sparks, Presbyterian minister, author and University of Wisconsin professor, will lead the program. He will discuss how to assess the way you handle criticism, how to divert resentment between secretary and minister and how to feel more confident when receiving criticism. For more information or preregistration, call Growth Associates at (316) 283-2400.

GB puts conference 'pie' into deep freeze



The frozen GC pie

Total 1983 budget
$5,064,530

North Newton, Kan.—The General Conference's General Board, meeting here Oct. 28-29, was forced to deal with the probability that 1983 will become the second consecutive year in which conference income will be less than its budget.

Motivated partly by cautious optimism and partly by necessity dictated by inflation, the board nonetheless told its commissions to plan for a budget increase of 4 percent for 1984, which could be as much as 8 percent higher than this year's receipts.

Last March, the GB made a decision to determine the distribution of conference income among commissions at the beginning of each triennium, so that commissions could plan more effectively and so that their annual lobbying during Council of Commissions for a greater percentage of that income could be eliminated.

In keeping with its commitment, the board voted 11-4 to retain the current formula for the distribution of undesignated receipts—65.0 percent for the Commission on Overseas Mission, 18.3 percent for the Commission on Home Ministries, 8.1 percent for the Commission on Education and 8.6 percent for Mennonite Biblical Seminary—for the next three years.

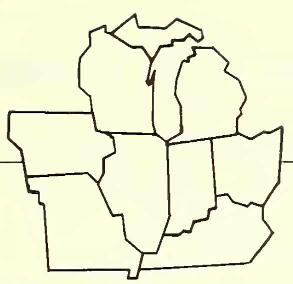
DA in session: (left to right) Ted Stuckey, chairperson Carol Suter, Larry Voth

Determining the size and division of the GC budget "pie" or prorations for the 1983-86 triennium was an anguishing task for board members. Early during the weekend, members spent a session sharing personal priorities and goals for the conference over that period. What resulted when those goals were pooled was a composite list of tasks favoring strong Canadian/U.S. ministries, including church planting, church growth and nurture, strengthening of families, improving conference communications, developing church leadership, improving intraconference unity and continuing the pursuit of closer inter-Mennontie cooperation.

During a special in-depth review of the Commission on Overseas Mission, the GB heard more about the effect of the lower-than-expected conference giving of the past two years. When asked by vice president Jim Gingerich whether COM was planning a "mid-course correction" in its highly publicized goal of

(continued on p. 565)

THE MENNONITE
CENTRAL DISTRICT EDITION



CENTRAL DISTRICT REPORTER
November 22, 1983

Lima congregation celebrates 50 years

On Sunday, Oct. 9, First Church, Lima, Ohio, held a 50th anniversary celebration during the morning worship service, carry-in dinner and afternoon service.

The morning worship featured special messages from former pastors. Kenneth Bauman, pastor of First Church, Berne, Ind., which has had a close relationship with the congregation since its beginnings, spoke during the afternoon gathering.

In January 1933, afternoon and evening services were begun in a building on the corner of Scott and Eureka streets, Lima. The church was first known as the Mennonite Gospel Chapel.

Then pastor of the Ebenezer Church, Bluffton, P. A. Kliewer, had seen a need for a church in Lima as a church home for young people working there. He and the pastor of St. John Church, Pandora, Edgar Toews, with the youth groups of both churches, were in charge of services until September 1933, when John Esau, appointed by the Middle District home missions committee, began serving as the first pastor. (Until May 1957, the church was a mission project of the Middle District.) Youth groups from First Church, Bluffton, and Grace Church, Pandora, also assisted once a month. On Oct. 1, 1935, the church was organized with 12 active members and four associate members. Present membership is 120.

The basement of the present building was constructed in 1936, with assistance from Bluffton and Pandora churches; the building was completed in 1953. Remodeling projects were completed in 1978 and in 1981.

The Womens' Missionary Society, organized in December 1934, and summer Bible school, held since 1934, have been two forms of outreach beyond their own congregation. In 1976 and 1977 the church sponsored a summer service unit which conducted day camp and counseled underprivileged and handicapped children and assisted elderly, handicapped or needy families.

For the past six years, with three other area Mennonite churches, First Church has assisted with establishing and operating a family home for eight mentally handicapped women.

Those who have pastored First Church are: John J. Esau, 1933-1938; George C. Dick, 1938-1943; John Esau (interim), 1943-1944; Sylvan Lehman, 1944-1962; Otto Dirks, 1962-1968; Paul Boyer (interim), 1968-1971; George Leppert, 1971-1975. Terry Ayers has served since September 1975.

District conference 1984

A joint program committee of the Central District Conference and the Ohio Conference (Mennonite Church) has been meeting throughout the summer and making plans for our 1984 district conference, which will be in Kidron, Ohio, March 29-31.

Theme is "Living HIStory" with Robert Kreider, North Newton, Kan., as the speaker. Duane Beck, West Liberty, Ohio, will lead in worship each morning.

We will meet at the Kidron Mennonite Church and use Central Christian High School across the street for separate business sessions and food service.

The host churches for the joint conference are Kidron Mennonite Church, Oak Grove Church (Smithville, Ohio) and Salem Church (Kidron, Ohio).

Some changes that you will note are a chicken barbecue Friday night for all, rather than having several banquets, and scheduling longer staggered lunch periods, with workshops and committee hearings offered either before or after the meal.

Also new to CDC people is the fact that there is no registration fee; two offerings will be taken for covering expenses. *Mark Weidner*

The Central District ministerial committee solicited the major articles for the next two pages of this issue. Those on the committee are (from left) Mark Weidner, First Church, Bluffton, Ohio, conference minister and ex officio member; Marvin Zehr, Maplewood Church, Fort Wayne, Ind., chairperson; Barry Hieb, St. Louis Fellowship, secretary; Larry Wilson, Salem Church, Kidron, Ohio; and Phyllis Baumgartner, First Church, Berne, Ind. Photo by Duane Gundy

How do I perceive the role of the pastor?

As servant and role model

Usually when asked this question, I use words like "enabler" and "facilitator." These words, given to me when I was a student at seminary, describe a good model for a pastor.

The meaning of the word "enabler" is "one who authorizes or empowers a person to do something" while a "facilitator" seeks "to make easy, promote or help forward." While these serve to describe a certain style of ministry, they do not, I think, say it all.

A word that has come to hold more meaning for me as I have worked in the ministry is the word "servant." A part of the meaning of this word as I found it in the Bible dictionary is "a person at the disposal of another." In other words, as a servant I try as much as possible to meet the needs and work with the congregation in whatever way is found most helpful, within the limitation of my own giftedness, of course. Many times such leadership will take the form of enabling and facilitating. Other times a withdrawal of involvement or on the other side a fairly assertive leadership style is required. As pastor, I need sensitivity and help in discerning what is appropriate and when.

A second important aspect of the role of pastor, I believe, is that of role model or example, as used to be said. Unfortunately I find myself still reacting to the harsh connotation of the term. I believe this does not mean to be a perfect specimen of Christianity. Instead this must come not only in the form of sharing and exposing the victories as they come but also sharing and exposing the struggles that we encounter along the way of truly becoming disciples of Christ. I believe that kind of sharing, appropriately done, can provide more encouragement and stimulate more growth than one who presents a picture of perfection.

So today, as I respond to the question of the role of the pastor, I would hold up these two concepts of servant and role model, looking to Christ as my role model of servanthood. I only pray that I may become more like him. *Sheryl Dyck, First Church, Champaign-Urbana, Ill.*

Dyck

Reichenbach

As shepherd and lover

I receive the words of Peter in 1 Peter 5:2-5 as a pastoral challenge to me. As pastor I am called to be both a shepherd and a (com)passionate lover (see also Matthew 9:36-38): one who truly loves the Owner of the flock (God), the Chief Shepherd of the flock (Jesus Christ) and the flock itself (the congregation).

My love for the Owner involves growing in my knowledge of him; my love for the Chief Shepherd involves feeding his lambs, taking care of his sheep (John 21), that is, nurturing people at all levels of spiritual growth; my love for the sheep involves knowing them and being known by them, as well as a willingness to lay down my life for them and to make known to them everything I have learned from God (John 10, 15).

Further, I see myself as a kind of sheep-shepherd (a player-coach, as it were) who perhaps best leads the flock by being an example to them. Even as the Lamb is my shepherd (Revelation 7), I seek to model meekness for the flock.

Finally, I am committed to help the flock overcome its sheepishness when it comes to incorporating others who are not in the sheepfold (John 10). *Doug Reichenbach, Wayland (Iowa) Church*

As praying friend

As the pastor of a small rural church I see my role as follows:

Ministering to our congregation's members and families in the usual ways by preaching, teaching and being available as a friend.

Going to our nearest hospital, 40 miles away, on a regular weekly basis to visit anyone from our county, no matter what their religious affiliation. This often opens the doors to homes of unchurched people.

Getting to know and trying to work with our local ministers in the county.

Visiting in the homes of unchurched people and becoming their friend so that in time of need, such as serious illness or death, they feel free to come for help and encouragement.

Establishing a church-sponsored tutoring program for children who have need for help with their schoolwork.

Helping get a hospice started and training the volunteers for their work in the homes of terminally ill patients.

Being a regular visitor in the homes of the terminally ill in order to listen as they open up to express their feelings, then offering them encouragement as well as praying for and with them.

Being the chaplain in our local nursing home.

Being available in my office each morning for anyone who desires to talk or discuss concerns they face in daily living.

Maintaining a current list of available resources in order to make referrals when I am unable to meet personal or family needs.

Spending time reading, studying and praying in order to be prepared to handle almost anything that may come along.

Then pray, pray, pray. *Russell Welty, Comins (Mich.) Church*

As servant-leader

Although there are voices calling for leadership meaning "decisive action" on the part of the preacher, I see my role more as a low-key servant-leader who seeks to be an enabler calling forth the gifts of people as they are challenged to be good stewards of all of life.

This is done as a friend and counselor, on a first-name basis where that is comfortable. It is done through the worship services of the church conducted with informal dignity, celebrating being a part of the people of God as a local body, as a district conference and in ever-enlarging circles of identity. It is done through the supportive role of my wife in an unofficial team ministry.

As administrator-coordinator I aim to steer the family of faith in programs for people, not people for programs. The teaching role is to further "prepare God's people for works of service" (Ephesians 4:12, NIV), being a creative minority as salt, yeast and a beam of light in the darkness, taking journeys inward in order to travel the journey outward and carry on the great commission of our Lord. *Leo L. Miller, Meadows (Ill.) Church*

Welty

Miller

Guidelines for pastor/congregation evaluations

A growing number of congregations are adopting a policy of reviewing their ministry and congregational life every several years in order to maintain an effective program as they sense God's leading. The ministerial committee is supportive of this direction since the result of such reviews is usually a stronger pastor/congregation relationship and thus a stronger overall congregational ministry. The following guidelines are provided by the committee to churches as an aid in planning and moving through a review process.

I. Presuppositions

1. It is understood at the time of the initial call that there will be regular evaluations of the pastor and congregation during the term of service.

2. It is understood that both the pastor's gifts and performance in the congregation and the congregation's goals and performance will be a part of the evaluation.

3. It is understood that the pastor will be a participant, along with designated people from the congregation, in outlining the nature, instruments and procedures to be used in the evaluation.

4. It is understood that the conference ministerial committee and/or the conference minister may be called upon for assistance in the evaluation as desired by the pastor or congregational leaders.

5. It is understood that the goal of the evaluation is to enrich both the ministry of the pastor and that of the congregation.

6. It is understood that personal prayer and self-evaluation are important ingredients for all who participate in this evaluation.

II. Preparations for an evaluation

1. The time for the evaluation should be determined by the church council in consultation with the pastor. Preferably this would be set at the beginning of the new term. Some congregations may wish to schedule the evaluation at midterm, which sets it apart from the consideration of a renewal of term. Other congregations may choose to have the evaluation as part of the input and preparation for the consideration of a new term of service.

2. One or two people should be designated by the congregation to work with the pastor in outlining procedures, preparing materials and scheduling the evaluation. These plans are to be approved by the church council/pastor support committee/deacons or the body to whom the pastor is accountable.

III. Possible procedures to be used in the evaluation

1. An evaluation instrument is to be prepared and given to each member. This should include input from the pastor, questions he or she wants feedback on, questions on congregational goals and performance, and questions regarding the pastor's performance in the congregation.

2. Discussion should be in small groups, preferably in the more informal atmosphere of homes. Care should be taken to provide congregational leaders in each small group with such additional information as needed during the discussion. The group should be led by a member of the church council or deacons. This small group process can be an important educational experience for members as well as for evaluation. Evaluation forms should be distributed one week in advance, completed and brought to the small group discussion. At the close of the meeting the evaluation instruments, signed or unsigned, are collected by the leader along with a summary of the discussion. These are then returned to the people responsible for the evaluation who will then tabulate and summarize the results.

3. Those responsible for the evaluation will prepare a summary and share this with the pastor and spouse privately and allow for a time of response, clarification, questions and a discussion of the meaning of the findings.

4. These people will also report their findings to the church council/deacons or other designated group who will then formulate a report to be given to the congregation. If an extension of the term is a part of the process, then a recommendation will also be formulated to be brought to the congregation.

5. If the renewal of the term is a result of the evaluation an appropriate service of praise and affirmation may be planned for the pastor and congregation to publicly renew their commitments to the Lord and to one another.

IV. Resources for evaluations

1. People from outside the congregation such as the conference minister, ministerial committee members or others such as area pastors may be helpful in the pastor/congregation evaluation.

2. The book *The Pastor-People Partnership* by Leland Harder should be read by the pastor and those responsible for leading the evaluation. It contains a wealth of information that is valuable in the experience of evaluation.

3. The conference minister maintains a file of questionnaires used in evaluations. These may be helpful to you in the development of the instrument used in the evaluation.

4. It would be helpful if a summary of your experience in evaluation and the instrument used could be sent to the conference to enlarge, refine and enrich our total experience.

V. Pitfalls to avoid

1. Seeking to use the general evaluation process to solve a particular problem either the pastor, congregation or both have been unwilling to face is usually unproductive.

2. Don't wear out the congregation with frequent evaluations. Every three to five years may be adequate, with a smaller group such as the council handling reviews in between.

3. The survey forms completed by the congregation should be entrusted to a few chosen people who will compile and present the findings to the congregation and pastor. Don't just give the stack of forms to the pastor to read on vacation.

4. Make the process fit your congregation. Good planning and a clear understanding of procedure is needed before you start.

MME to be held in northwest Ohio Feb. 17-19, 1984

A Mennonite Marriage Encounter weekend will be held Feb. 17-19, 1984, at Lima Best Western Motel, on Highway I-75 and Bluelick Road, Lima, Ohio. Marriage Encounter is for any couple who desires to grow in their marriage relationship and who is interested in experiencing the joys of improved communication. Couples married for a few years as well as those married 40 years have found Marriage Encounter to be a growing and rewarding experience.

Although Mennonite Marriage Encounter is being sponsored by the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church, it is open to couples of all denominations and faiths.

A deposit of $15 is requested. Mennonite Marriage Encounter will prepay all the weekend expenses including food, lodging and supplies. Near the end of the weekend the average expense per couple will be shared and each couple will have the opportunity to make a donation which will enable other couples to have this experience. Couples are encouraged to attend regardless of their financial situation.

Your pastor or church office has registration forms. For additional information about Mennonite Marriage Encounter, you may write to Myrna and Randy Krehbiel, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, or call 316/283-5100.

Chris Beery, daughter of Margery Beery, First Church, Wadsworth, Ohio, began during the summer serving as church administrator at First Church, Wadsworth.

Rhett Butler, son of Keith and Anita Butler, Maplewood Church, Fort Wayne, Ind., and **Jeff Kehler**, son of Neil and Eileen Kehler of First Church, Bluffton, Ohio, have accepted the invitation of Maplewood Church to serve as interns in pastoral ministry during the 1983-84 school year. Both Rhett and Jeff have been involved in Maplewood Church and are students at Fort Wayne (Ind.) Bible College in the pastoral ministries department. Their unpaid internship in the church involves working closely with the pastor, Marvin Zehr, in many aspects of the ministry of the congregation.

Leland and **Bertha Harder** moved to Newton, Kan., in June. They had taught at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries and pastored the St. Louis Mennonite Fellowship in recent years. Each has served on a variety of conference committees. Recently Leland published *The Pastor-People Partnership* and Bertha, *Intergenerational Learning in the Church*.

William Keeney, who teaches at Kent State University at Kent, Ohio, began serving as interim pastor of First Church, Wadsworth, Ohio, in September.

Nancy Kerr resigned from her pastorate at Cincinnati Fellowship as of Sept. 15. She is now a student at AMBS and lives on the campus.

On July 1 **Gary Martin** began working for the Central District missions committee as a part-time church planting consultant. This is the position Leland Harder held before the Harders' move to Kansas. Gary is also working with the Chicago Mennonite Learning Center in development and is a member of Grace Community Church, Chicago.

John Reeser, an AMBS student from the Meadows, Ill., area, was a summer pastor at Meadows Church, assisting Leo Miller. During several weeks of this time, Leo and Lola Miller took a two-week course at Union Theological Seminary at Richmond, Va.

Clarence Rempel accepted a call to become pastor of Topeka (Ind.) Church in September. Conference minister Mark Weidner brought the message and led an installation service Sept. 11.

Clarence and Amanda both grew up in Henderson, Neb. They have four children: Nathan, 9, Daniel, 5, Sarah, 4, and Elizabeth, 1. Clarence is a graduate of Grace College of the Bible and Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary of Fresno, Calif. The past year the Rempels attended AMBS in Elkhart. Clarence was ordained in Lincoln, Neb., where he was a pastor with the Northern District.

Weldon Schloneger resigned from his three-year pastorate at Neil Avenue Church, Columbus, Ohio, effective the end of October. He is planning to teach at a Bible school. Weldon and Florence and their two sons plan to remain in Columbus until summer 1984.

Melvin Schmidt, Wichita, Kan., has accepted a call to become pastor of First Church, Bluffton, Ohio, in January. For the past 14 years he has pastored the Lorraine Avenue Mennonite Church in Wichita. He is a graduate of Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., and earned the BD degree from Yale Divinity School, New Haven, Conn. For four years he served with Mennonite Central Committee in Indonesia as director of Church World Service. Melvin and Charlotte have three daughters: Kimberly and Heidi, students at Bethel College, and Johnna, a high school student.

Donovan Smucker, Waterloo, Ont., is serving as interim pastor of First Church, Bluffton, Ohio. Elaine Rich and David Voth of the summer interim pastoral team continue in part-time pastoral work with Smucker.

Elmer Wall has announced his resignation as pastor of the Carlock/North Danvers congregations in Illinois, to be effective at the end of December. He has served there as pastor since 1971 in a shared ministry between the two churches. Elmer and Winnifred will be moving to Freeman, S.D., with their daughter Mary Beth, who is a sophomore in high school. They also have two sons, Timothy, a senior at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., and Loren, a freshman at Bluffton (Ohio) College. Elmer has accepted a call to become pastor of Salem-Zion Mennonite Church in January.

Besides the contributions of Elmer and Winnifred in their local setting, they have been active in the conference. Winnifred has led various choirs at conference and Elmer has served two terms on the missions committee, much of that time as chairman. The Walls have served previously in Middlebury, Ind., Middletown, Ohio, and Sioux Falls, S.D.

On Sept. 1 **James Waltner** began a sabbatical leave of four months this year and one month in 1984. During the sabbatical, he is continuing work on a commentary on the Psalms which is to be part of the *Believers Church Bible Commentary Series*. This is a project sponsored jointly by several Mennonite conferences, Brethren in Christ and Church of the Brethren. During his sabbatical, Evelyn Bertsche will work four-fifths time for the congregation and Walter Dyck one-fifth time. Mary Lehman Yoder will coordinate worship.

Clarence Rempel family

Martin

Schmidt

Elmer and Winnifred Wall

THE MENNONITE

WM EDITION

WM

window to mission

DECEMBER 1983-JANUARY 1984

WORLD PEACE PRAYER

LEAD ME FROM DEATH
to LIFE, from FALSEHOOD to TRUTH

LEAD ME FROM DESPAIR
to HOPE, from FEAR to TRUST

LEAD ME FROM HATE
to LOVE, from WAR to PEACE

LET PEACE FILL OUR HEART,
OUR WORLD, OUR UNIVERSE.

the open window

What is the difference? We were often asked this question during the week of August 1-7. Friends, not so familiar with Mennonite roots and history, asked to help them understand the gathering of Mennnonites at Bethlehem '83.

Attending parts of the conference and also hearing our enthusiasm for this unique, historical moment for North American Mennonites didn't answer their question. What is the difference? Who are the MCs? Who are the GCs?

It was not such an easy question to answer. We could talk of Swiss-German Mennonites and Russian Mennonites. We spoke of John Oberholtzer; of conservative and liberal. It even made me wonder too. What really is the difference except that some of us prefer shoofly pie to pluma moos, or chicken corn soup to borscht!

It became clear to me that I could find as much variety theologically in either group as between groups. Time at Associated Biblical Seminaries and a summer in a GC church in Nebraska had already taught me that.

Evening joint meetings at Bethlehem lessened even more any thought of difference. During those moments of worship, when God's word challenged us—MCs and GCs—our differences became our strength. As we declared God's faithfulness our voice was one.

I thank God for Bethlehem '83, an opportunity to join together as Mennonites, to affirm as one people of God that Christ is indeed the cornerstone of our faith, whether that faith be born of Pennsylvania-Dutch or Low-German roots.

—Vel Shearer
Editor of
Voice

COVER

People around the world are joining in the World Peace Prayer each day for one minute at midday, thus forming a continuous chain of prayer to encircle the earth. The prayer is being offered for a disarmed world. Won't you join in prayer too?

WM

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CONFLICT RESOLUTION

PEACE-LIVING FAMILY STYLE

Kim Luke

FAMILIES ARE made up of unique individuals; each created with his or her own special looks, actions, feelings, and thoughts. No two people are exactly the same.

Because of this, disagreements will inevitably arise. Often these disagreements turn into misunderstandings, arguments, criticism, put-downs, and fights.

Families need to find suitable ways to cope with conflict and come out of conflict situations with positive resolutions.

Creativity is a key word in resolving conflicts. The best method, which involves creativity and planning, is prevention. Often it doesn't take a whole lot to start a fight—a remark, a certain situation, a cross look. Family members can begin to recognize what it is that sets the conflict ball rolling in their family and then make a conscious effort to avoid these pitfalls.

Kathleen and James McGinnis in their book *Parenting for Peace and Justice* suggest three basic and effective ways of dealing with parent-child conflicts: modifying the environment, changing ourselves, and problem solving with children.

1. Modifying the environment

Enriching the environment (providing more stimuli) encourages creativity and reduces boredom and conflicts.

Impoverishing the environment, like calming the children before bedtime, can also reduce conflicts.

Simplifying the environment—making it easier for children to do things without problems (spill-proof cups) can prevent conflicts.

Restricting the environment (confining loud indoor play to the basement) avoids conflict.

Planning ahead with the children and preparing them for changes also helps. My son was asked to serve as ringbearer for a wedding when he was not quite three years old. The wedding was to be in a church with which he was unfamiliar. So, the day before the rehearsal I took him to the church, gave him time to look around, and we practiced his part. Just the two of us were there. I had a chance, in the quiet of the church, to explain to him what was expected. At rehearsal time he felt confident because he was prepared.

2. Changing ourselves

This can mean different things to each parent. For many it may mean getting some useful information from parents, teachers, and family about realistic expectations for children.

For me it meant planning the day each morning so that my son could follow my schedule.

3. **Mutual problem solving with children**

To help a family come to a consensus decision you may try these steps: state the problem or conflict clearly; brainstorm alternatives without evaluating the ideas suggested; now evaluate the alternatives without personal comments, and try to be objective; poll the group to see if you have an alternative that everyone can accept; decide how you can implement a solution.

Joy Wilt in her *Ready-Set-Grow Series* says that disagreements can help you to learn and grow if they are understood and handled wisely. To do this the persons involved need to determine just what the disagreement is about. Then they need to listen to one another to try to understand why the other person thinks as he or she does. Both persons need to share, then research both opinions. Decide together what you should do and then do what you have both decided to do.

Families can often use this method before disagreements turn into fights. But what if a fight does occur, as it often does?

Once started, a fight can go on forever unless there is a way to come to a conclusion. A simple, effective process for settling an argument is suggested in a manual, *Family Night at Home*, published by the Mennonite Brethren Church.

Allow time for cooling off, maybe up to fifteen minutes. Stop calling one another names and accusing one another. Listen to each other. Try to find a sensible solution and if participants can't come to an agreement, then call in a parent and abide by his or her decision.

Families can use all of these ideas and add their own creative methods and variations for conflict resolution. Just don't throw up your hands in frustration. Work at discovering positive ways to cope and resolve conflict.

CONSIDER READING

Caring Enough to Hear and Be Heard by David Augsburger (Herald Press, 1982). Regarding his book, David Augsburger says, "The purpose of this volume is to evoke new understanding of the power of equal listening, attending, hearing, leveling, risking, and caring in relationships, and to invite new experiments and experiences of being with others in equal communication and equal regard."

Listening and speaking, hearing and being heard—understanding these two sides of dialogue is essential to the clear communication that must be a part of any in-depth relationship. The author helps readers improve their communication skills, especially in relation to the people who mean the most to them—their spouse, their children, and their friends.

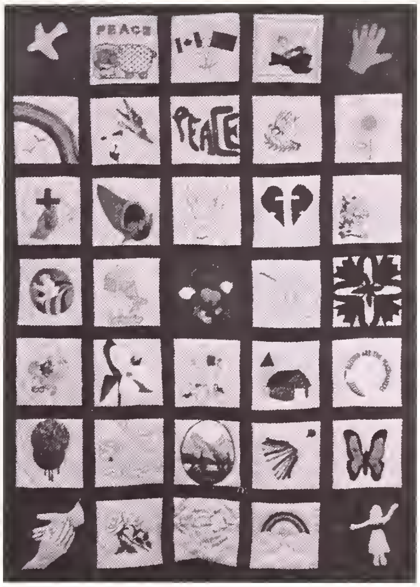
—Paul Schrock

Celebrate Joy! by Velma Seawall Daniels (Doubleday, 1981). This is a book of some fifty anecdotes about a variety of people, famous or obscure, who have developed an outlook on life, a way of faithful living, or a special gift that brings joy to their own lives and the lives of others. This is easy pick-up reading to provide inspiration and a fresh outlook on ordinary living.

—Hope Lind

Quilting for Peace

Louise Block



HAVE YOU EVER felt the frustration of not being able to do anything about the prospect of nuclear war?

A group of about twenty-six women in the Harrow, Ontario, community felt this frustration and decided to do something. They joined forces to make a friendship-peace quilt as a gift to Russian women.

Each of the Canadian women designed and sewed, painted, or appliqued a twelve-inch quilt block with something representing peace or friendship or something depicting their area of Canada.

Many hours of fellowship were spent during the actual quilting. Articles about peace and the need for international friendship and understanding were read and discussed during these times together. The women were able to feel that they were making a concrete step toward friendship with women in the Soviet Union.

The plan is to send the completed quilt to a sister village in Russia, one about the same size as Harrow, Ontario, which has a population of 2,300.

The Harrow women are not deceiving themselves. They are very aware of the reality of the possibility of a nuclear holocaust. However, they feel that a small step toward world friendship and understanding is better than no step at all.

Praying for Peace

Lois Schrag

For those of you who have gathered together in Peace Covenant Prayer Groups, this is a time for proclaiming the message that our God desires peace (Luke 2:14). God is the source of peace (Rom. 16:20) and gives a parental blessing to those who work for peace (Mat. 5:9). What a cause for celebration and sharing!

Has the time come for your group to share your precious peace tradition with a group that has not experienced that same tradition? As you have prayed, studied, and perhaps acted together in the cause of world peace, you may have found others in your community who are making a peace witness.

A suggestion for expanding your prayers for peace is that your Mennonite group relate in really concrete ways with a group which does not come from a "peace church" tradition. Come together around the common purpose of praying for peace and praising the Prince of Peace. To be sure, you will want to continue to meet in your convenanted group, but pairing with another group can bring a new dimensions to your praying.

THE COM CONNECTION

Margaret Ediger

Margaret and her husband, George first went to Colombia, South America, in 1963. Her responsibilities have been many and varied. Besides those mentioned here, she has also been instrumental in setting up seminary extension courses and has also worked with various aspects of music in the church.

IN COLOMBIA and throughout Latin America many daily tragedies are being lived out in the home. Unstable common-law unions, battered wives, abused children—these pinpoint only a few of the problems which commonly occur.

Adults and young people are searching for answers to these situations. As Christians we believe that God has given us bibilical principles for family living. If these principles are followed faithfully, many difficulties can be avoided; or, should difficulties arise, they can be more easily solved.

To speak to this need, as well as to prepare material for the training of lay leaders for the Colombian church, I have prepared a series of auto-didactic texts in Spanish. Translated, their title is "The Happy Christian Home." The first 300-page book was published three years ago. It deals with the themes of Christian foundations for marriage, biblical guidelines on sex, and husband-wife relationships.

Initial response to this course has been good. It is designed for study at home followed by weekly class discussions. It is being distributed in many parts of South, Central, and North America. Various church groups other than the Mennonites, such as Baptists, Presbyterians and Lutherans, are using the text.

Recently I have had many opportunities to speak on the subject of the home at women's retreats, parent-teacher meetings and groups in local churches. I was also able to test the effectiveness of the course as a whole while teaching it to a class in the Bogota Mennonite Church.

My greatest rewards have come from hearing testimonies from persons who have been helped through the studies. One such student was a mother with teenage children and an alcoholic husband. As the course progressed she gratefully shared how her home life was improving. Even her husband acknowledged the value of the instruction she was receiving.

Another student, a widow with two teenage sons, was able to open new lines of communication with her sons and help them to develop Christian guidelines for their sexual conduct. One student discovered new avenues for witness and ministry among her neighbors. Not only was she able to give them helpful counsel, she also found a means to refer them to Christ and encourage them to open their lives to him and receive his strength and wisdom for daily living.

A second book dealing with child development and the spiritual life of the home went to press in July. A third book still in the rough draft deals with relationships between parents and adolescents, as well as between the Christian home and the local church and community.

It is my prayer that God will use these studies to help form homes that glorify his name and where people are helped to live together in happier associations.

PROGRAM 3

PARENTING FOR PEACE AND JUSTICE

Gloria Miller

The scriptural background for this program-lesson is: Deuteronomy 6:5-9, Luke 15:11-32, 1 Corinthians 13:4-6; Matthew 5-7, Philippians 2:1-7, Psalm 126 and 127.

NURTURING FOR SHALOM would be a better title for this lesson because parenting should be nurturing—a gentle, consistent caring and training for an ultimate harmonious fullness bringing peace, which is the Hebrew meaning of shalom.

Parenting in this Old Testament definition, helps the child see self as an integral part of a worldwide drama in which he or she plays a significant role with God in bringing about shalom. It becomes an exciting, creative responsibility.

Parenting for peace is, basically, just plain good parenting. This takes work and energy, wisdom, and creativeness; it demands time and planning. Parents must pray for the "mind of Christ" as they share with him the co-creative task of nurturing their precious disciples for his kingdom.

Let the child know he or she is loved

God does this for humanity. All through the Bible, God tells us that he loves us. Cornelia Lehn's book, *God Keeps His Promise* (Faith and Life Press and Herald Press, 1970), oozes God's love. Even the title reminds us of God's loving faithfulness.

As parents love their children, they teach much about God's love. In loving them unconditionally, as God does, children learn the message of forgiveness.

In loving them as a special creation of God, children sense the divine value of life. In experiencing their parents' inclusive acceptance of all people, children feel God's universal love for all.

Show and tell your children that God loves them and so do you.

1. Tell the child verbally, "God loves you." Take an infant or toddler and make a game of touching each finger and toe as you say, "God loves (child's name), God loves Mommy, God loves Daddy, and so on." Continue by saying, "Let's count all the people that love you. Mommy loves you . . ."

The Pattibook series by Mary E. LeBar (Scripture Press) is an excellent resource.

2. Sing of God's love to children and have records that can be listened to often and easily. An inexpensive record player, operable by the child, is a wonderful tool for allowing the child to hear of God's love whenever he or she wants. It can become a background for their playtime or rest time. My children went to sleep for years listening to happy children's songs.

3. Arrange one-to-one relationships. In a family there is often "all-of-us-togetherness," but each parent needs to take time to be alone with each child.

My daughter tells how we did this in our family: "We four kids were each two years apart, so each of us had a different bedtime, thirty minutes apart. Beginning with the youngest, one-half hour prior to each bedtime was that child's private time with Mom. We could do anything we wanted during our half hour with her. We never did homework or piano lessons; always something special. Often it was a good time to just talk because there were no siblings to interrupt, interfere, or compete. You could say anything and Mom was there to listen.

"Because Dad was selling insurance, he couldn't be home with us to do this, so instead we got to go on "business" with him. Each of us would spend a week alone with him while he traveled. We stayed in the hotel with him, ate in restaurants with him, and even went on business calls with him."

I got the idea for doing this after reading an article in *The Mennonite* years ago about John Wesley's mother who spent time alone with each of her children each week. These private times together can be adapted to any age, any schedule, varied as much as your creativity allows, and can continue even after the children have left home.

The reward is a depth and dimension of mutual loving understanding that develops when only two people are relating to each other.

4. Arrange for developing relationships with grandparents and the extended family, even if this takes time and money. If needed, cultivate a substitute extended family.

It's worth it for the child's sense of being loved and valued by many people. This cultivates the child's ability to love many people and develops a sense of inclusiveness.

5. Give genuine compliments. Be specific and give the compliments in private sometimes. This is valuable for any age child.

Recently I told my eighteen-year-old son, in the privacy of his room, "I really thank you for the way you remained calm this morning when some of us were arguing in the kitchen. Your question to us brought us back to a rational discussion and a good solution. You certainly exhibited maturity when you intervened, and I thank you so much."

His response and body language showed me that he realized he had played a significant role in bringing about shalom.

Consider creative discipline alternatives

Discipline is important to the nurturing parent because discipline seeks to discover the cause of misbehavior (whatever the parent may determine misbehavior to be) and to help correct the causal factor. Therefore, discipline will be a learning experience, often preventive, and hopefully constructive.

Punishment, on the other hand is often a quick response to the sympton and the immediate response can be destructive in discovering or correcting the cause.

Don't children often misbehave when their needs are not being met? I frequently see children being slapped while grocery shopping with their parents during afternoon nap time or shortly before mealtime, or as they reach out for something colorful. The child is being punished for being tired, hungry, and curious, which are all natural human responses. Often adult behavior is expected of a child who is "too-young" for a period of time "too-long."

Discipline alternatives

1. *Prevention.* Prepare children and give them time to be mentally ready. Be sure they have eaten and have had a nap. Tell them what behavior is expected before they participate in an adult event like shopping, church, or a wedding.

Tell them what will happen and suggest things for which to watch. Give them an idea of the time frame in language they understand. Be fair with them. If the event lasts too long and they are uncomfortable, leave.

2. *Natural consequences permit children to learn from the natural order of events.* The discipline is what naturally comes as a result of the child's action. For example, the child who does not eat will be hungry. This teaches children to make decisions and accept responsibility for the outcome. Soon appropriate decision making will result and the child will feel confident.

3. *Removal from the aggravating situation.* This is spoken to in "Conflict Resolution Peace-Living Family Style" found on pages 3 and 4 of this magazine.

4. *Child choosing alternatives* This is more difficult and needs wise parental help in the selection of alternatives. The child may need parental direction in participating, but it can be useful in teaching good decision making because of the natural consequences with every alternative.

An excellent series to explore for people who care about children is the *Ready-Set-Grow Series* by Joy Wilt (Word). This includes a set of twenty-four books on such topics as *Surviving Fights with Your Brothers and Sisters*.

Live in community

The family living together in community involves caring—working, playing, and praying—together. A family must be creative and plan for community activities. They have value beyond togetherness. They may even result in a feeling of celebration.

Togetherness activities

1. Work should be done with one another and accomplish a finished goal. The reward may be the accomplished goal or the fun of working together, but may also be celebrated in another shared activity. Working together can include a wide age-range, erase stereotypic sex roles, and be fun.

Many families care for gardens, freeze vegetables, clean chickens, and bake pies, or clean garages as family-shared work activities. Mennonite Disaster Service is an excellent way for working together and families should take their young children along when they can.

Don't buy war toys. Any toy which causes a child to imagine and play destructively and violently cannot be considered in the child's best interest.

2. Play is an activity of the mind and body. Family play is a wonderful way to be creative. Games without competition are more fun and better for everyone involved. It is easy to play common games like softball and volleyball and not keep score. Charades can entertain for hours. Check into the many international, noncompetitive games in such resources as *The New Games Book* (Doubleday) and *Cooperative Sports and Games Book* (Pantheon Books).

Toys should encourage or be a product of the imagination. Whatever happened to "dress-up," to homemade cardboard box dollhouses, to hollyhock dolls, and to rhubarb leaf hats?

Don't buy war toys. Any toy which causes a child to imagine and play destructively and violently cannot be considered in the best interests of the child. Read *How to Teach Peace to Children* by J. Lorne Peachy (Herald Press).

Vacations, other than summertime, can prove to be happy variations for togetherness. The European practice of a holiday can be fun without going far from home or costing much money. Utilize local attractions and homey ideas. Use Saturdays or family-night-at-home for these experiences. Celebrate birthdays and other family events in alternative ways as you'll find suggested in the book *Alternative Celebrations* (Alternatives, Inc.).

3. Praying with sensitivity for children can begin with their bedtime prayers. After devotions children often reveal their inner thoughts. Share and pray about them together. As they grow older and participate in family Bible study, they then will share more of their concerns.

Pray for people—those you know and don't know, your neighbors and world leaders, little problems and global concerns. Verbalize and use different prayer styles. Be brave. Experiment with prayer. Experience the workings of the Holy Spirit. Encourage and allow the children to share freely. Really be open to the Spirit. Praying as a family is the most intimate sharing you will do.

Have a global perspective

Good parents will help their children to have a global perspective. Mennonite Central Committee projects help children become aware of human needs. Through books your family can become familiar with peace heroes throughout history. Buy and explore together Cornelia Lehn's *Peace Be With You* (Faith and Life Press).

Become personally acquainted with minorities. They are not only black or poor people. Get to know old people, single people, divorced families, developmentally disabled persons, women, Jews, unwed mothers, alcoholics, addicts, prisoners, or exconvicts—all who are minorities living in every community. Interact with them and become friends.

Look seriously at VS (voluntary simplicity) and try some experiments of living more simply as suggested in the book *Living More with Less*, text by Doris Longacre and study/action guide by Delores Friesen (Herald Press).

Living more simply is better for our planet and the people on it, and besides, it is scriptural.

PROGRAM "HOW-TO" IDEAS

1. For your devotions, use the one provided for Program 3 available to you in the 1983-84 Devotional and Resource Packet. Order packet from the WM Office, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, for $2.

2. Secure the Peace Kit for Children from the WM Office in Newton, Kansas, or from the Canadian Resource Centre in Winnipeg, Manitoba. This kit contains sample books which teach peace. Order some of these books for your personal and church libraries.

3. Plan a "Living More with Less" event for your congregation, or WM group.

4. Have someone or several persons share the content of the preceding program-lesson. Then divide into interest groups to do some creative brainstorming and sharing and maybe even concrete planning in several of the following areas:

a) private, specific compliments you can give to your children

b) discipline alternatives for specific situations

c) noncompetitive games

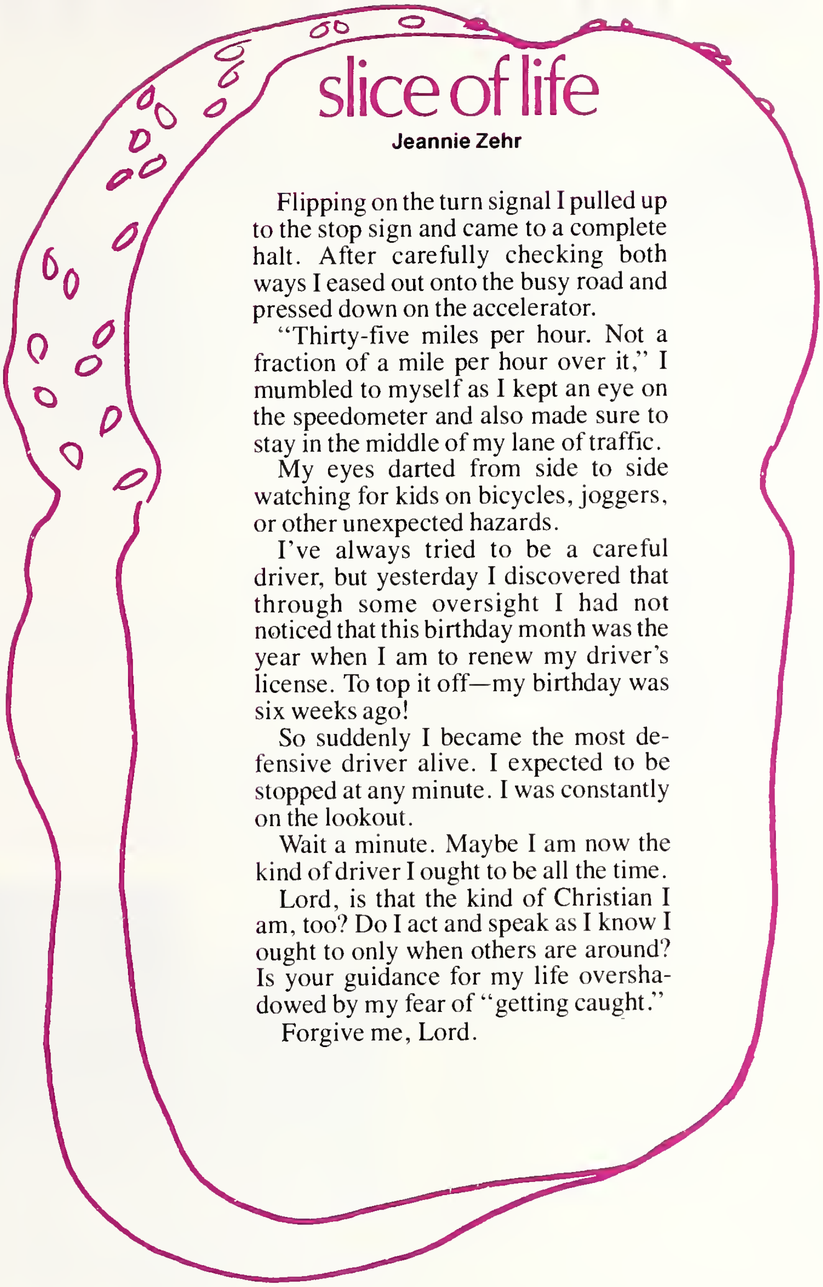
d) prayer alternatives for your family to try

e) family "work-together" experiences available in your area

5. Discuss:

—When was the earliest you can remember that you felt that God loved you?

—Who, other than your parents, parented and nurtured you?



slice of life

Jeannie Zehr

Flipping on the turn signal I pulled up to the stop sign and came to a complete halt. After carefully checking both ways I eased out onto the busy road and pressed down on the accelerator.

"Thirty-five miles per hour. Not a fraction of a mile per hour over it," I mumbled to myself as I kept an eye on the speedometer and also made sure to stay in the middle of my lane of traffic.

My eyes darted from side to side watching for kids on bicycles, joggers, or other unexpected hazards.

I've always tried to be a careful driver, but yesterday I discovered that through some oversight I had not noticed that this birthday month was the year when I am to renew my driver's license. To top it off—my birthday was six weeks ago!

So suddenly I became the most defensive driver alive. I expected to be stopped at any minute. I was constantly on the lookout.

Wait a minute. Maybe I am now the kind of driver I ought to be all the time.

Lord, is that the kind of Christian I am, too? Do I act and speak as I know I ought to only when others are around? Is your guidance for my life overshadowed by my fear of "getting caught."

Forgive me, Lord.

WOMEN AT BETH

Marion Keeney Preheim

Elsie Flaming and Irene Klassen posed by the WM symbol shortly after their election as WM president-elect and Canadian (General Conference) vice-president.

"I got my enthusiasm from my mother and a woman who started a girls' club," commented Elsie Flaming who was voted in as Women in Mission president at the triennial conference. "The club leader led us in Bible study, showed us how to do household things, and loved us."

Elsie has been an enthusiastic member of her local WM group for twenty-seven years and member of the WM Executive Committee. She is now finishing a term on the Commission on Overseas Mission.

By profession Elsie is a nurse, specializing in geriatric nursing. She enjoys singing in the church choir in Leamington, Ontario.

Irene Klassen accepted nomination on the WM ballot for Canadian vice-president, and was also elected at Bethlehem '83. Her background in local church work and as president of the Alberta WM for five years prepared her well for her new work.

She has been the historian for her local church for a number of years as well as serving as reporter for *The Mennonite* and correspondent for the *Mennonite Reporter*. Lately she has been busy writing her family's and church's histories.

"I hoped for a time to sing together in one united voice . . . to pray for peace and spiritual growth . . . to renew and affirm our allegiance to Jesus Christ as our Lord."

So said Helen Reusser of Kitchener, Ontario, in an evening worship service at the triennium where she served as leader. Helen co-pastors with her husband, James, in the Mannheim Mennonite Church, a congregation in the Mennonite Church.

Helen is a teacher by profession, but was at home with her children when they were small. Gradually she did substitute teaching, assisted in a kindergarten, and taught a class of children with emotional problems.

Helen Reusser served as one of the worship leaders at the joint evening services.

She served as a half-time consultant in Christian education for the Central District, and now does that half time for the forty-two Mennonite Church congregations in Ontario and Quebec. She also serves as Foundation Series resource person for the General Conference Mennonite Church.

In her church she sometimes preaches, but more often serves as worship leader when her husband preaches. Her specialty as pastor there is in Christian education.

"Peace and love and grace be with all that know Christ," stated Gertrude Roten of Elkhart, Indiana, in quoting Paul as she led the Bible study for the joint Saturday morning worship at Bethlehem '83.

Gertrude teaches Greek and New Testament at the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, so relating to both denominations is nothing new to her. Her work at the seminaries combines well her educational background and work experience.

EHEM

...a look at our 1983 triennial conference

Early in her career she taught psychology and some Bible at Manchester College in Indiana. She did some graduate work in guidance and counseling and holds a master's degree in Greek from New York Biblical Seminary. "At the time I didn't know what to do with it, but it was always my love. I also had a deep longing to teach the Bible," commented Gertrude.

Gertrude Roten, at the podium, led in a Bible study at Bethlehem '83 for a joint morning worship service.

She feels women should prepare themselves so that they will be ready when doors open. She has heeded her own advice as she has a doctorate in education. She is also a mother of two.

Katherine Hildebrand, St. Catharines, Ontario, has served on the General Conference Triennium Program Committee for a total of four conferences, with one more to go. She has been the committee's secretary for the last two conferences.

"I have gotten to know some people intensely and we've had a good relationship," she said, commenting further that it has been a rich experience to see lay people do things in the conference.

Back home Kathy is involved in activities at Faith Mennonite Church. She is active in WM and on the church council and deacon board. She serves on the Peace and Social Concerns Committee, MCC Ontario, and is active in MCC Canada.

Her three children are grown. "You feel different about coming to conference without them," she commented. Having more time, however, has meant that Kathy can do things like attending part-time at Brock University.

Premiered at the closing Bethlehem '83 morning worship service was a cantata "That They May Be One." Esther Wiebe of Winnipeg, Manitoba, composed the music; Urie Bender wrote the text based on the idea of unity.

Katherine Hildebrand served as a member of the Bethlehem '83 Program Committee.

Cornerstone

Esther Wiebe could not be at the conference, but her oratorio music was performed there by a choir at the Sunday morning service.

Esther could not attend the conference, but her presence was surely felt there. Her sense of harmony fit aptly the biblical texts such as the following one for choir and tenor solo:

"I will sing to the Lord for He hath triumphed gloriously. The Lord is my strength and song. He is become my salvation. He is my father's God; I will exalt Him. The Lord shall be King o'er all the earth. There shall be one Lord. He shall reign forever."

The cantata score arrived in eastern Pennsylvania in early spring in plenty of time for the singers to prepare. Singers were from the Eastern District, and the Franconia and Lancaster conferences.

WM office jottings from Joan

LIVING STONES AT BETHLEHEM '83

Wednesday, August 3, was a special day for Women in Mission conferees. At two in the afternoon, 346 women gathered in a large tent for the WM program and business session. The theme for the afternoon was, "Come as Living Stones."

The executive committee and council members reported on WM work during the last triennium. This was done visually with the use of large building blocks depicting WM's financial goals on one side and the WM symbol on the other.

After the devotional, an Eastern District women's choir sang several anthems. Special recognition was given to Cornelia Lehn who authored the book, *I Heard Good News Today*, a collection of mission and service stories for children.

At the business session, several constitutional changes were voted upon. The usage of "First and Second Vice-president" was changed to "U.S. Vice-president and Canadian (General Conference) Vice-president." Another change was the dissolution of the Young Mission Workers organization on the General Conference level. Instead, the promotion of the work of children in mission outreach will be in the hands of the district with the district adviser in charge. Each district will be given the responsibility to decide to what extent this aspect of outreach should be advocated.

Following the example of the General Board, changes were made towards using inclusive language in the constitution.

After the meeting, a cold drink and Pennsylvania pretzels served by the Eastern District women provided a refreshing break on a hot afternoon.

The culmination of the "women's day" programs came at 5:45 when Women in Mission and the Women's Missionary and Service Commission (MC women's group) joined together for a celebrative worship service in Stabler Arena. Besides a joint WM/WMSC choir, a multimedia slide presentation entitled "Mennonite Women: Building Together as Living Stones" was shown. The slides, many of which were contributed by WM persons across the United States and Canada, depicted the life and work of Mennonite women from past to present.

At the display area, the batik diptych entitled "Living Stones" created so beautifully by Ethel Abrahams, artist from Hillsboro, Kansas, elicited many comments from passersby. Eastern District women also displayed an elegant quilt with squares contributed by each Eastern District women's group.

FINANCIAL UPDATE

At the end of September, only 54 percent of the WM budget receipts had been received. January receipts will also be counted towards the '83 budget this year.

Special thanks is due for a sizable financial gift from an estate in the Northern District. Have you considered including Women in Mission in your will? Think about it.

response

As a reader of *Window to Mission* I would like to comment about some articles referring to "peace," especially "Program 6: True Wisdom for Christian Peacemakers." The writer has quoted Old Testament verses where the people did not obey the king (government). She omitted Romans 13 when quoting New Testament verses. It definitely says that we have to be subject to the government. Jesus changed a lot of laws, so we have to live by the new laws that he made. So, let's not concern ourselves too much about what the government is doing and about nuclear war.

What we as Women in Mission should be more concerned about is the abortion going on in our country. In Toronto, Canada, last year abortions surpassed the live birth rate.

I suggest you study the whole Bible and not omit parts of it that do not fit in today's standards and I am sure you will find the real "peace" that Jesus talks about.

Alice Tiessen
Leamington, Ontario

contributors

Vel Shearer (The Open Window) makes her home in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, with her husband, John, and three teenage sons. She is a trained counselor and serves as editor of the Mennonite Church's Women's Missionary and Service Commission's monthly publication *Voice*. As a part of the Bethlehem '83 experience she and Jeannie Zehr, editor of *Window to Mission*, have exchanged editorials for an issue of the sister magazines.

Kim Luke (Conflict Resolution) and her mother, Gloria Miller, team up to do "Parenting for Peace" workshops in the area surrounding Sioux Falls, South Dakota. She is a youth leader at Good Shepherd Mennonite Church in Sioux Falls and the mother of a four-year-old son.

Louise Block (Quilting for Peace) was one of the Essex, Ontario, women from various churches including Mennonite, United Church, Baptist, and Catholic, who worked on the Peace Quilt Project.

Lois Schrag (Praying for Peace) is the Women in Mission representative on the General Conference Peace and Justice Reference Council.

Gloria Miller (Program 3: Parenting for Peace and Justice) is a member of the Women in Mission Literature Committee and serves as the WM representative to the MCC U.S. Peace Section. She and her husband, Merle, are actively involved in the Good Shepherd Mennonite Church, Sioux Falls, South Dakota.

Jeannie Zehr (Slice of Life) edits *Window to Mission* from her home at 4226 Maplecrest Road, Fort Wayne, Indiana. She also works part-time as director of the Maplewood Church Nursery School.

Marion Keeney Preheim (Women at Bethlehem) serves as a staff writer for the General Conference news service and writes papers called ACTS for the Commission on Home Ministries. She is a deacon, teacher of adults and co-editor of a newsletter for Faith Mennonite Church, Newton, Kansas.

Joan Wiebe (WM Office Jottings) serves as Women in Mission coordinator with her office located at 722 Main, Newton, Kansas.

credits

COVER: Is taken from a postcard distributed by the Covenant Peacemaking Program of the Fellowship of Reconciliation, Box 271, Nyack, NY 10960. These postcards are available for 10¢ each, or 100 or more for 5¢ each, plus shipping. Used with permission.
CONSIDER READING: P. 4, book reviews reprinted from *Voice*, the monthly publication of the Women's Missionary and Service Commission of the Mennonite Church.

Vel
Shearer

Gloria
Miller

Marion
Keeney Preheim

forecast

We think you'll find the next issue of *Window to Mission* a special treat if you enjoy books. We will have an inside look at the making of a book, *The Sun and the Wind*, the first children's picture book printed by the General Conference. The program included will focus on another new book, *I Heard Good News Today.* The authors of *The House at the Back of the Lot* and *Sara's Trek* will share from their experiences also.

Printed in U.S.A.

bright ideas

OFTEN WM’ers ask for information on missions and missionaries. Are you on the mailing list to receive the newsletter of the African Inter-Mennonite Mission? (General Conference missionaries serve in Africa under the umbrella of AIMM.)

The publication is always filled with photos, interesting articles, information about our missionaries and their work, prayer suggestions, and other helpful material. It is for persons who are interested in missions, Sunday school teachers, prayer partners, and others.

The *AIMM Messenger* is published quarterly and is financed by freewill contributions of the readers. Presidents of U.S. and Canadian WM groups are already on the mailing list. To get your name on the mailing list, send your name and address to AIMM, 224 West High Street, Elkhart, IN 46516.

The Oak Grove Church WM group at Smithville, Ohio, does volunteer work at a nearby home for boys with discipline problems. Once a month some volunteers go to do baking which usually includes eighteen to twenty dozen cookies and twelve to fifteen pies.

They also donate quilts which are given to the boys as love gifts when they leave the home.

In the fall they have made apple sauce and mended jeans for the boys.

These women have come up with some creative responses to needs in their community. We would be interested in hearing what other groups are doing too.

Does your WM group send a copy of your program booklet to the WM Office? We hope you will do so as this provides a good view for the staff and the executive committee of what is happening out in the grass roots, and also is a resource which is shared with others at conference display tables.

Send your booklet to the WM Office, Box 345, Newton, KS 67114.

Does your WM group use roll call times? A few new ideas that have crossed my desk and which may be of interest to your group are: share a verse on joy; share something from Proverbs that amuses you; share a poem or verse about Easter; share the occupation of a biblical person; share an interesting verse or person you recently found in the Bible.

What are some roll call ideas that you have tried? Let us know so we can pass the ideas on to other groups.

If you have ideas to share in our *Bright Ideas* column, please send them to the editor, Jeannie Zehr, 4226 Maplecrest Road, Fort Wayne, IN 46815.

A LIVING, ACTIVE CHURCH

On Aug. 21 Walter Smeltzer, pastor of **Norwood Mennonite Church** in West Peoria, Ill., spoke at **Meadows** (Ill.) **Church**, and Leo Miller, pastor at Meadows Church, spoke at Norwood. This pulpit exchange between Illinois Conference (MC) and Central District (GC) churches is encouraged by the Central Illinois joint ministers' group to foster increasing cooperation and a spirit of togetherness.

Speaker for the **Bluffton** (Ohio) **College** Forum on Tuesday, April 19, was Thomas P. Gumbleton, 1983 Bluffton College Keeney Mennonite Peace Lecturer. A Detroit native, Gumbleton is a pacifist and one of the leading Roman Catholic bishops that drafted a pastoral letter denouncing President Reagan's nuclear arms program.

D. Elton Trueblood, author, lecturer and founder of Yokefellows International, presented the 1983 **Bluffton College** commencement address on May 29. His topic was "The Creation of Freedom."

Erland Waltner, past president of Mennonite Biblical Seminary and president of the Mennonite Health Association, was speaker for the spring Bible study at **First Church** of Nappanee, Ind., May 1-2. His theme was "Living Active Congregations: Past/Present/Future."

Special meetings were held at **Pulaski** (Iowa) **Church**, Sept. 25-28. The speaker was Ernst Harder of Dallas Mennonite Fellowship, and his theme was "The Faithful Church in Today's World." Harder was pastor at Pulaski in 1950-1953.

Mary Oyer, on the music faculty of Goshen (Ind.) College, was the resource person for the Harvest Heritage celebration at **Oak Grove Church**, Smithville, Ohio, Oct. 8-9. She met with the church worship commission, music personnel and other interested people Saturday noon and led sessions where people could learn to lead singing, taught new hymns, led evening choir rehearsal and on Sunday morning directed congregational singing of hymns written by Mennonites.

Pastor/spouse retreat is refreshing

Thirty-two district pastors and spouses participated in the fourth annual retreat at Camp Friedenswald, Cassopolis, Mich., Oct. 9-11. The retreat was planned by the ministerial committee. Gene and Mary Herr of Elkhart, Ind., led, using the theme "Reflection and Renewal."

Many expressed appreciation for the individual time given to personal meditation after some guidance by Gene and Mary. A helpful point was made that in prayer we listen to God rather than always trying to tell him things. Listening, we learned, takes discipline, since we often want to fill the spaces with our own words.

Hiking, canoeing and volleyball were also enjoyed in that setting. As usual the staff served us well and made the two days enjoyable and refreshing.
Mark Weidner

Marcia Yoder ordained

Marcia Yoder was ordained on Sept. 25 during the morning worship service at Hively Avenue Mennonite Church, Elkhart, Ind. She has been serving there as pastor since September 1982. John Schrock and Dee Schwartz led in a litany. Gertrude Roten read Scripture, Erland Waltner brought the charge to Marcia, Mark Weidner led in the laying on of hands and prayer, and Phyllis Baumgartner brought a charge to the congregation. The morning concluded with the benediction by Marcia's father, singing of hymn number 606, and a fellowship meal.

Marcia Yoder

Marcia grew up near Washington, Iowa. She later graduated from Goshen (Ind.) College with a bachelor's degree in elementary education and taught school. She also served as an Overseas Mission Associate in Curitiba, Brazil. She graduated from Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries in May 1982.

Sponsors, hosts needed

Mennonite Central Committee is looking for a few good hosts.

MCC needs sponsors and hosts for trainees from 29 countries participating in this year's International Visitor Exchange program (IVEP). These 79 young women and men will soon complete the first six months of their stay in North America, and MCC must find them homes and work for their second six-month term that begins mid-February.

"Being the host or sponsor of a trainee gives us North Americans a chance to learn about life overseas while staying at home," says William Snyder, MCC's special assistant to the executive secretary. "We get a new perspective on churches and countries overseas."

Sponsors provide the trainees with an opportunity to work approximately 40 hours each week from mid-February to August. At present the trainees work in child-care centers, homes for the aged and disabled, hospitals and schools. Others work on farms, in homes, at banks and in bookstores. They are trained as electricians, mechanics, computer technologists and carpenters. A mason from Kenya is laying bricks in Canada. An exchange visitor from Jamaica designs and sews clothing. A Swiss woman does cancer research part-time at a university center, in addition to helping with homemaking.

Sometimes the trainees can live and work at the same place. At other times MCC needs a host family, in addition to the sponsor, to provide a home away from home for these people. A group, family or individual can often together sponsor and host an international guest.

This year a congregation in Nebraska has "adopted" a medical student from the Netherlands. The congregation supplies the finances so that the medical student can volunteer in the local hospital, go on rounds with the doctors and observe surgery; a family in the congregation provides the home.

IVEP is a cultural exchange program with the purpose of promoting good will, better understanding and international friendship through person-to-person contacts. Doreen Harms, director of the program, says that reports from this year's sponsors, hosts and trainees are again positive, which means "that adjustment has occurred and that sharing and learning are really happening."

MCC depends on Mennonite individuals, families, businesses, institutions, congregations and Sunday school classes to host or sponsor these 79 visitors. Those interested should contact MCC before Dec. 25 at this address: Mennonite Central Committee, 21 S. 12th St., Akron, PA 17501, or phone 717/859-1151.

Touching another culture: international clothes closet established

Wearing clothes, eating food and hearing music from another culture are ways to come closer to other people in the world, without actually traveling across the globe.

These experiences, especially valuable to children, are helpful to people of all ages, believes Joanne Hess Siegrist of Bird in Hand, Pa. After gathering international clothes for children's worship in her home church, Stumptown Mennonite Church in Bird in Hand, she initiated an International Clothing Loan Closet to be used by those seriously studying other cultures and mission exchange.

Siegrist has now donated the international clothes to MCC SELFHELP Crafts, which is operating the closet without charge for all Mennonite and Brethren in Christ church, school and family groups.

The present closet has a small but growing collectiion of clothes—an embroidered dress from the West Bank, a man's shirt with silver trim from Thailand, a flowered Vietnamese *Aodai* or dress, Eskimo garments in children's sizes, as well as clothing from Belize, Honduras, Guatemala, Kenya and Iran. When clothes are lent, SELFHELP provides information about wearing and caring for the clothing, as well as some general information about the country.

The closet's present clothing has been donated by missionaries and overseas workers and travelers. Siegrist urges those who are storing international clothing to consider donating it to the clothing loan closet, so that many throughout the church can benefit by using it.

Siegrist suggests that modeling or displaying the clothing be accompanied by serving international foods, telling stories from the culture featured or singing international songs.

For information or to request use of the clothing, contact MCC SELFHELP Crafts, 240 N. Reading Road, Ephrata, PA 17522.

WOMEN

General Conference Women in Mission

"Come as Living Stones" was the theme of the GCWM meeting Aug. 3. Almost 350 women from the United States and Canada met in a large tent on a very warm afternoon. **Lora Oyer**, GCWM president, led the meeting.

Constitutional changes printed in *Window to Mission* last spring were accepted. New officers are **Elsie Flaming**, Canada, president-elect and **Irene Klassen**, Canada, second vice president.

Joan Wiebe and **Ethel Abrahams** led the meditation written by **Lois Deckert**. Ethel had created a beautiful batik diptych of linen, wax and dye entitled "Living Stones," and this theme was carried out in a skit given by GCWM officers and literature committee. The skit, presenting WM work as building blocks or stones, was written by **Lora Oyer** and narrated by **Phyllis Baumgartner** and Lora. **Jeannie Zehr** and **Mary Nussbaum** made the blocks, which represented building together through WM outreach.

Special recognition was given to **Cornelia Lehn** for her newest book *I Heard Good News Today*, commissioned by WM. The song "Living Stones" was sung. ED women hosted refreshment and fellowship time.

That night the combined Mennonite Church women and GCWM celebrated women's participation in Mennonite church life.

The WM display featured the batik diptych by **Ethel Abrahams**, a lovely quilt by ED women (each church represented by a block) and many materials published by and for conference women, including the new WM manual. *Evaleen Bertsche, Meadows Church, Meadows, Ill.*

BC cleanup

This fall, as in two previous years, the Bluffton College Women's Council sponsored a college cleanup. Women from Bluffton area Mennonite churches and Maplewood Church, Fort Wayne, Ind., met Saturday, Aug. 27, to prepare the dorms for incoming students. The women cleaned hallways, lobby areas and kitchenettes.

To all women's groups: Please keep me informed as to your activities, projects, special studies and speakers. I will include as much as possible on this WM page so that we know what other women are doing.

Send an article and photo if you can. Or send the information and I will write an article. Let's keep in touch.

Send material for "Women at Work" to: **Mary Ann Kooker, 235 Brookwood, Bluffton, OH 45817**.

Maplewood Church celebrates Christmas

"Christmas Around the World" was the theme of the December 1982 Friendship Circle meeting. Women learned about familiar and unfamiliar ways people celebrate Christmas. Women experienced learning, tasting and singing. They brought homemade gifts of goodies such as cookies, jam, bread and candy to exchange. *Donna Lehman, Maplewood Church, Fort Wayne, Ind.*

Women's retreat

Ruth Stoltzfus is a tremendous person. She is an excellent speaker who always holds your attention. In her topic "How to Be What You Are Meant to Be" she stressed that everyone has a talent and that everyone should use it.

The responsibility of married women until children are school age is taking care of the home. This is our heritage. During this time women can do volunteer work. Do not let outside activities come between the wife and husband. Mothers leave out fathers too much in child care. Fathers should help with children—in counseling, talking with them and being a part of their lives.

Be willing to take some risk of disapproval. It's worth it. If you feel you should be using a certain talent and doing something, go ahead and do it. During the later stages of life you need to be active and useful, whether alone or in a family. Everyone should have someone to confide in.

Friday night several tables were filled with foods for snack and recipe sharing. You felt you had to taste everything. The Chicago area churches had planned the weekend, and Ivorie Lowe was the chairperson. She was so much fun and we had a terrific time.

Saturday afternoon we enjoyed a number of activities—aerobic exercise, pontoon rides, hiking, candle wicking, touring Middlebury and making fabric picture frames.

The weekend closed with communion Sunday morning and a soup and salad lunch at noon. Our offering was over $900 and will buy kitchen equipment for the camp. *Mary Bertsche, First Church, Bluffton, as told to Mary Ann Kooker*

Bechler serving second term

Curt Bechler began serving as youth worker in the eastern half of Central District Conference in August 1981. He is also working for the district on the Camp Friedenswald staff.

In late spring of this year the education committee and the camp invited Curt for a three-year term of service, and Curt accepted that call. His assignment is three-fifths time as district youth worker and two-fifths time at Camp Friedenswald.

Mark Miller, Chenoa, Ill., is youth worker for the western part of the district, serving one-third time with Central District Conference and two-thirds time with the Illinois Conference of the Mennonite Church.

Puppeteers to Canada

Jack and Althea Shoaf and the Kingdom Kids puppet group of First Church, Berne, Ind., traveled to the communities of Riverton and Bloodvein, Man., and several other communities to share the gospel through puppetry for two weeks in July. Neill and Edith VonGunten of First Church serve as missionaries in Riverton. David Lehman of First Church, a volunteer under Canada's Native Ministries board, died in a canoeing accident there in June. Several parents of the puppeteers accompanied the group. The Kingdom Kids were invited by the Native Ministries board. Members of First Church provided financial support for the venture.

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youth

Baseball and small groups

For several days I've been shuffling an unopened letter from one side of the desk to the other. On the front in bold yellow letters the envelope announces, "Serendipity Workshops." This morning I opened it. As expected, the brochure outlined an array of workshops coming this fall and winter. Yet, amidst all the typical hype and freebie offers, I found a gem. It was a clear and concise outline of the four principles for leading small groups on which Lyman Coleman has built his Serendipity study materials for the past 20 years.

Lyman Coleman, the originator of Serendipity, is a master at developing *koinonia* (true communion and sharing) in small groups. His principles and methods are simple. His four-step approach he likens to a baseball diamond, with home plate being the final goal of all small groups—an open, mutually supportive, caring body.

First base, in Coleman's scheme, is history-giving. I would describe it as intentionally getting to know one another. People talk about themselves, sharing stories about their pasts, family relationships, turning points, significant people and events in their lives—everything that makes them the person they are.

Second base, Coleman suggests, is a stage of response and affirmation. People share the strengths, abilities and positive qualities they see in each other. It's a time of building confidence and support and creating an atmosphere of love.

Third base calls for individuals to share at a deeper level. Opportunity is given to express needs and questions. Individuals voice concerns and reveal aspirations for the future. Each person is encouraged to set goals and take specific steps toward growth.

Home plate is described as a depth-support team relationship. A more common phrase might be "community—the body united together." At this stage individuals are encouraged, with the support of the group, to continue growing and maturing in their faith.

Coleman's ball-diamond analogy conjures up the ideal picture we often paint of Acts 4. Could it really be that the first-century Christians shared mutually and were all "of one heart and soul"? I sometimes doubt it. Yet it's an ideal. It's a perfect model for us to strive for.

Coleman's scheme is also an ideal picture of how groups can share and become close. (In my own experience using Serendipity materials, sorry to say, we've never gotten much past second base.) Yet Coleman's approach is a well-devised model to follow in leading small groups. Sunday school teachers, youth group sponsors, and Bible study leaders can all benefit from Coleman's four-step outline.

In the past months I've sat in (or taught—I'm guilty too) Sunday school classes where people—with stories, needs, questions and hurts—have been sidestepped to get to the lesson. In youth groups, planning is often the main agenda. Little time is given to listening to the kids and building relationships of trust. Many small group Bible studies devote much time and energy to the Word of God but give little attention to the people of God gathered within their circle.

Coleman's four-base analogy is a reminder to put people and relationships at the heart of our efforts to be faithful leaders.

Batter up. *Mark Miller, conference youth minister (west)*

YOUTH MINISTRY
Serving Together

Mennonite Mental Health Services offers scholarships

Carl L. Good, executive director of Mennonite Mental Health Services, has announced that six scholarships for the 1984-85 academic year are available for college or graduate students pursuing mental health services studies. The scholarship amounts are between $500 and $1,000, and students may receive them for one or more years, Good said.

The program is sponsored by a fund established in 1968 from the donated earnings of voluntary service workers at Brook Lane Psychiatric Center, Hagerstown, Md., and additional contributions. MCC manages the fund.

To qualify, candidates must be college juniors, seniors or graduate students with a declared major and vocational interest in mental health, developmental disabilities or related fields. They must also have at least a C+ grade average and show interest and participation in the church. Other factors considered are financial need, service experience, attendance at a church-related college and membership in a Mennonite, Brethren in Christ or Church of the Brethren congregation.

Applications and all supporting data for the 1984-85 scholarships must be received by March 1, 1984. MMHS will announce winners April 15, 1984. For application forms write to: Carl L. Good, Executive Director, Mennonite Mental Health Services, 21 S. 12th Street, Akron, PA 17501.

Disabilities committee holds eighth retreat

The theme of giving and receiving was well amplified during the eighth annual retreat of the Mennonite Disabilities Committee Sept. 9-11 at Shipshewana, Ind.

Marvin Yoder led devotions on Friday evening and Saturday morning, using parables from the animal kingdom which were interesting and understandable to young and old alike. William McGrath, guest speaker from Ohio, shared on "Will You Help Me?" and "May I Help You?"

On Saturday evening the campers, siblings and counselors gave the traditional program for the parents of songs, Scripture, testimonies and a skit on Jesus and the 10 lepers. On Sunday morning McGrath talked about seven birds of the Bible and lessons from them.

During the adult sessions on Friday and Saturday, campers, siblings and counselors did crafts, had recreation and learned to know each other. Saturday afternoon everyone had time to swim, boat, walk or just visit. No one attending retreat had to worry about meals due to the kindness of eight members from churches who graciously donated time, work and food to feed everyone.

Evan Hoover, director, and the retreat committee, Project Promise workers, counselors and many others worked hard to make this a successful and beneficial retreat for all who attended. *Rachel Guedea*

Young adult retreat

A life planning retreat for young adults will be held Dec. 9-11 at the Laurelville Mennonite Church Center. Young adults 18-35, single and married, who want to explore future goals and decisions in relation to their vocation, service, residence and other issues are invited to attend.

The retreat, cosponsored with Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries, will be led by Lavon Welty, MBCM youth ministry staff, and Myrna Burkholder, staff for Student and Young Adult Services. Assisting will be Bob Brenneman and Todd Gindlesperger, young adults serving on the Laurelville staff. Church service and educational representatives will also be present for the weekend to share opportunities for young adults.

For more information and registration contact Laurelville Mennonite Church Center, Route 5, Box 145, Mt. Pleasant, PA 15666, 412/423-2056.

Chain of command

Many still believe in the old chain of command: God—Christ—Man—Woman. This is great for those who believe in chains. In Christ, women have been set free. *Ruth Brunk Stoltzfus, CDC women's retreat, September 1983*

BC reports increased enrollment

Following a one-year slump in enrollment, Bluffton College has this fall experienced a 13 percent increase in new students and a modest increase in total enrollment.

Official enrollment figures this fall show a total registration of 616 students, compared with 601 last fall. Six hundred ten students are registered for credit and six students are auditing. Five hundred twenty-three students are full-time and 87 are part-time. There are 227 new students, compared to 200 last fall. Full-time equivalence is 572, compared with 560 last year.

The increase is seen as a reflection of the college's new recruitment efforts, as well as a continuing commitment to quality education in a Christian context.

Bluffton College president Elmer Neufeld, commenting on the enrollment increase, said, "I am very pleased that the number of new students has again increased and that total enrollment is also up a bit from last year. We have an excellent admissions staff, directed by Fred Amstutz, who was appointed to that position Sept. 1, 1982. We have increased financial aid options, especially with the Learn and Earn program. Beyond that is a strong academic program with a serious commitment to moral values and Christian faith."

This marks the second year for the Bluffton College Learn and Earn program, which offers a campus job to all new residential students. This program takes up where the federally backed work-study program leaves off. Approximately 425 students have campus jobs this year.

The return of increased enrollment is a positive sign for the future of Bluffton College.

District calendar

Jan. 13-15, 1984—Mennonite Marriage Encounter, Ramada Inn, Champaign, Ill.

Feb. 16-19, 1984—Perspective '84, Leamington Hotel, Minneapolis

Feb. 17-19, 1984—Mennonite Marriage Encounter, Lima (Ohio) Best Western Motel

March 23-24, 1984—Iowa MCC relief sale; University of Iowa Recreation Building, Iowa City

March 29-31, 1984—Central District Conference, meeting with Ohio Conference (MC), Kidron, Ohio

To our contributors

The next issue of the *Central District Reporter* will appear Dec. 20.

Articles and photos for the Jan. 17 issue should reach this address by Dec. 2:

Evelyn Krehbiel, Editor
Central District Reporter
229 Brookwood
Bluffton, OH 45817.

We ask that articles be typewritten and doublespaced, and we urge you to keep a carbon copy of all material submitted.

Concern continues to mount among observers of Central America that full-scale war is imminent. Congressman Mike Barnes (D-Md.) made the following statement on Oct. 20: "I have just returned from Central America along with some of our colleagues who accompanied the Kissinger Commission to that region last week. And I must say to our colleagues that no trip I have ever taken has left me as depressed as this one did. The situation in Central America has never been worse. The region is dramatically more polarized than it was when I was last there. We are heading straight for war. . . . It is a war that I fear will happen sooner than we think. It is a war that I know will leave every country involved, including our own, incomparably worse off than they were before. It is a war that should not be fought, and it is a war that need not be fought. Whether the war happens or not depends on the choices of the government of the United States of America. It is within our power to have the war or not, as we choose" (quoted from *Proceedings and Debates of the 98th Congress, First Session*). Observers are especially concerned by indications that U.S. forces are preparing for a massive invasion of Nicaragua.

U.S. District Judge Jim Carrigan in Denver fined two Rocky Flats nuclear weapons plant protesters $300 each, then suspended the fines, saying, "I have no power to grant their request that Rocky Flats be stopped. But I'm not about to put them back in jail." The two protesters, Mennonite Kristine Selvig and Benedictine monk George Tamburello, served 40 days in jail when they refused to post bond for an Aug. 8 trespass action.

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placing 175 missionaries by 1985, executive secretary Erwin Rempel said that "there is no other way but to revise that goal." To simply maintain the current levels of missionary personnel—approximately 157—will require a 15 percent increase in budget over the next three years, he said. To stay at existing budget levels would mean a decrease in the missionary force to 1980 levels, about 135 workers, Rempel added.

Both the Commission on Education and the Commission on Home Ministries brought their goals for the next triennium to the GB at another session, including requests for funds to increase program and bring part-time staff in certain areas to full-time levels.

Despite those requests from all three commissions, as well as GB's own priorities spelled out in the first session, in the end the board was more sympathetic to recommendations from the Division of Administration.

DA, meeting concurrently, suggested to the board that the conference's "public relations" be strengthened through the addition of a staff person in the area of communications. After vigorous discussion about the pros and cons of creating such a position, the GB endorsed the idea of strengthening the communications staff for that purpose. With the state of the budget in mind, the board furthermore gave DA the responsibility to undertake a special 125th-anniversary (1985) fund drive, as well as to engage a fund raiser to steer that project. Other DA recommendations for 1984 were a 5 percent pay increase for staff (no increases were given in 1983) and a proposal to increase the '84 budget by 4 percent over this year's.

Because GB and DA are subsidized wholly by the commissions on a pro rata basis, the net result for commission budgets will be cuts in the already small budget increases they hope to receive in each of the next three years.

Complicating the debate about a new proration of income was the fact that a hefty percentage of the conference's receipts are already designated to COM. Only 22 percent of General Conference income is available to be prorated; the balance comes in designated either to a commission or to "where most needed." Any action by GB to alter prorated percentages among commissions, said conference treasurer Ted Stuckey, has little effect unless the cue is taken by church members and designated giving arrives at central offices in new proportions.

J. W. Sprunger, executive secretary for COE, was most pointed in his expression of the feelings of commission staff: "Am I to understand that the General Board is saying 'no' to bringing our youth and children's education workers up to full time, and is instead asking us to cut our budgets to allow for more GB and DA staff?" he asked. Responses to the GB decision by some staff and commission members were sharp, especially at a series of ensuing CHM meetings, where discussion was reportedly tense.

J. W. Sprunger reports COE's goals for 1983-86 to General Board.

General Board members, on the other hand, pledged to increase their own efforts at "getting the word out" about the conference's needs, its program and its opportunities, some of which are being scrubbed due to lack of money. The board will take final action on budgetary matters during Council of Commissions in March 1984.

In other business, the GB expressed first and second preferences for Saskatoon and Winnipeg, respectively, as site for the 1986 General Conference Triennial Sessions. The board further agreed to again participate in a joint Mennonite Church/General Conference convention in 1989, when churchwide meetings of the two groups would next coincide. The latter still requires approval of the Mennonite Church's General Board.
Larry Cornies

Over 110 vehicles from outside Otero County (Colo.), and about the same number from within, were parked on the Arkansas Valley Fairgrounds in Rocky Ford for what was the eighth and largest Rocky Mountain Mennonite Central Committee Relief Sale ever. Sponsored by the Mennonite, Mennonite Brethren and Brethren in Christ churches of Colorado, Kansas, Texas and New Mexico, the Oct. 15 sale raised $32,600 for MCC's relief work.

Growing interest in the issue of authority and leadership in the Conference of Mennonites in Canada has resulted in the calling of a study conference on this topic at Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg, Jan. 29-31, 1984. Several major presentations will be followed by plenary discussion. Later, small groups will be organized to work at specific authority issues being faced by the conferences and congregations. For further information write CML/CMBC Study Conference, 600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, MB R3P 0M4, or call (204) 888-6781.

The General Conference's Mennonite Men's organization has adopted the name "Tenth Man Church Building Plan" for a project adopted at its meeting at Bethlehem '83. The building plan would provide assistance to congregations for purchasing or arranging loans on a new facility. The plan's proponents hope to enlist 500 people or groups who will donate $100 as often as twice a year to assist churches. District or provincial mission committees within the conference would indicate the need for financial help. The "tenth man" title refers to the hope to find one person out of 10 adult male members in each congregation to be part of the plan.

MEDA studies relationship of development to God's kingdom

Wichita, Kan. (Meetinghouse)—Some 250 participants gathered at Wichita's Broadview Hotel Nov. 3-6 for the annual Mennonite Economic Development Associates convention, which this year studied the theme "Economic Development and Building God's Kingdom."

Neil Janzen, MEDA president, focused the convention's intent during its opening session by asking, "What place does the cross have on the chart of business success? How is the world of business connected with the kingdom of God? Where does the cross intersect with our marketplace activity?"

Conference speakers gave some of their own answers, alongside probing presentations on world economics and the place of the church in international economic development, during plenary sessions. The convention program was supplemented by workshops on a variety of topics, seminars on stress management and microcomputers for business, tours to outlying points of interest, and periods of worship and fellowship.

Melvin Loewen, institutional coordinator for the Economic Development Institute of the World Bank, Washington, outlined four levels of involvement in economic development overseas. International organizations, host governments, local communities and individual entrepreneurs are the key players in such development, Loewen said. He went on to delineate the responsibilities and contributions of each level of involvement in helping international development projects to succeed.

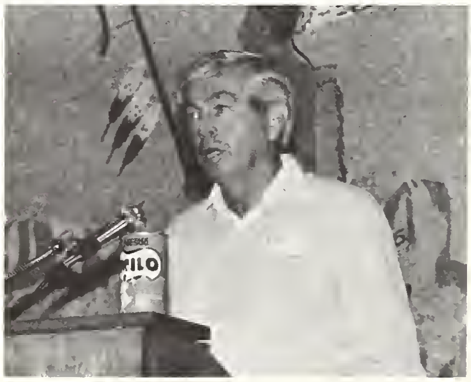
National governments, according to Loewen, are the "key partners" in extending economic assistance from developed to underdeveloped countries. The vital ingredients which only they can provide are basic security and protection for their citizens, a clear definition of economic policy and incentives, fair enforcement of laws pertaining to the economic system and an infrastructure to support efficient development, such as reliable energy sources and transportation.

Large international organizations, although essential forums and important sources of technical expertise, are the least important partners in the "hands on" aspects of development, Loewen said. Overriding political priorities on the part of host governments and the expansive bureaucracies of the multilaterals themselves often limit their effectiveness.

Loewen concluded that the goal of MEDA should be to continue working in concert with each of the four levels of involvement, trying to "achieve growth while humbly walking with our God."

In a plenary address the following evening, Alfred Whittaker, executive director of Institute for International Development, Inc., of Vienna, Va., said, "As near as I can tell, IIDI and MEDA are the only two organizations in the country doing this kind of [development] work." After describing his own pilgrimage from being a senior executive for Bristol-Myers to his present position, Whittaker spoke of some lessons about overseas development learned by IIDI, with the hope that they might be helpful to MEDA.

Dale Hochstetter reports on Jamaica.



Development projects, he said, are most successful when they are initiated by nationals—when North American partners simply provide resources for the pursuit of ventures which have originated with an entrepreneur in the host country. Joint projects, IIDI has found, are not feasible. Instead, IIDI encourages local organization, local boards of directors and a local name. It avoids exporting products from developing countries to developed countries. Moreover, the church provides an important context in which to screen and deal with individuals who want loans or other assistance with their endeavors.

Addressing himself to the conference theme, Whittaker said that the Christian businessperson in the United States and Canada must ask him- or herself, "What return has my life given to God in return for his investment in me and my resources?" Sharing business expertise and resources with individuals in developing countries can be part of the answer, he concluded.

Paul Leatherman of Mennonite Central Committee's SELFHELP Crafts program, Ephrata, Pa., shared some of his experiences in managing and promoting that cooperative enterprise. Program sales for 1983 are expected to exceed '82 sales by as much as 40 percent. SELFHELP Craft's goals, Leatherman said, are to sell as many items from Third World countries as possible, thereby assisting as many people overseas as possible, and to use these items to build bridges of understanding between people of different cultures.

Other convention speakers included Carl Kreider, Goshen, Ind., on "The State of the World Economy and its Impact on Us," and Paul McKay, North Newton, Kan., on "The Emerging Busi-

A chain of approximately 17,000 people joined hands along the 17-mile perimeter of the Rocky Flats nuclear weapons plant near Denver on Oct. 15. Joining in the protest were about 400 Mennonites from Denver, Colorado Springs, Fort Collins, Boulder and outlying areas in Colorado. Below, several Mennonites join in the chain.

Approximately $453—that is how much each Baltimore resident paid in taxes for defense in 1982. If the figure is not particularly significant, the means for providing the information is: Baltimore's city charter requires that the city yearly research and publish the information, accompanied by an annual appeal for military budget reductions and higher federal spending on jobs and social services. Voters in 77 other cities and towns have approved similar appeals, but only Baltimore and Pittsburgh have been bound to publish tax data and a public statement.

One day before the U.S. invasion of Grenada, former Mennonite Central Committee worker Katie Caruthers, who teaches in a secondary school in the western part of the country, reported, "We are not now in danger personally nor have we been at any time. Ask the people there (the United States) to urge the Reagan administration not to get involved. While conditions in Grenada are not ideal, they would become worse if outside forces were involved."

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ness Environment in Latin America." Vernon Wiebe, Hillsboro, Kan., led two Bible studies on the relationship of God's kingdom to economic development and to the importance of people.

During its business sessions, MEDA members heard reports from a number of its overseas projects, including Bolivia, Jamaica and Haiti. A budget of nearly $780,000 was approved for the current fiscal year (July 1-June 30), with more than half of that amount to come from government sources, namely Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and United States Agency for International Development (U.S. AID).

On the disbursement side, the single largest project assisted by MEDA overseas ($269,000) is a cooperative arrangement between a group of several dozen farmers in Haiti and the Hershey Cocoa Company in which MEDA supervises a cocoa growing operation. The farmers involved in the cooperative were able to realize a net profit of $4,000 in the past year, during which they produced their first cocoa beans. Other projects to get MEDA assistance this year are located in Bolivia, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Jamaica and Paraguay.

MEDA has more than 1,300 members throughout North America. Some 270 joined in the past year alone. According to the organization's literature, "the two-part program of MEDA, with a domestic division and an international division, combines the support of economic development in less developed areas of the world with the promotion of educational resources and activities in North America that deal with the Christian's role in the marketplace." The annual conference alternates its attention between the international and domestic divisions from year to year. The 1983 convention focused on the organization's international work. *Larry Cornies*

ASSINIBOINE TRAVEL SERVICE

1983 Tour Departures (From Winnipeg)

The U.S.S.R. Plus Finland: July 10 - Aug. 3, 1983
Tour Host: William Schroeder

Egypt, Israel and Greece: Nov. 29 - Dec. 17, 1983
Tour Host: Dr. Frank C. Peters

1984 Mennonite World Conference Tours

Assiniboine Travel Service has arranged for a variety of all-inclusive tours to precede or follow the World Conference Assembly in Strasbourg, France, July 24-30, 1984. Detailed itineraries are available for each tour. The tours all combine educational input from knowledgeable hosts with leisurely touring. (If you wish to join a tour but not attend the Assembly, or if you wish to arrive earlier or stay later for private travel, we would be pleased to make alternative travel arrangements.)

1. **From Rome to Witmarsum —Church History Tour: June 30 - July 21, 1984.** Host: George Epp
2. **Soviet Union Tour: July 1-21, 1984.** Hosts: John Friesen and Abe Dueck
3. **The Church Through the Centuries: July 6-23, 1984.** Host: Waldemar Janzen
4. **Exploring the Middle East: July 9-23, 1984.** Hosts: David Schroeder and Gerald Gerbrandt
5. **CMC Choir Tour to Europe: July 13 - August 9, 1984.** Host: Helmut Harder; Music Director: Bernie Neufeld
6. **Eurail Youth Backpacking Tour:** (Details to be announced in fall.)
7. **Exploring Renaissance and Reformation Centers: July 11 - August 9, 1984.** Hosts: Henry Krahn and Ken Reddig
8. **Austria, Hungary and the Soviet Union: July 29 - August 17, 1984.** Hosts: Al Reimer, John R. Friesen and Roy Vogt (Waiting list only)
9. **Central Europe Tour of Germany and Italy: July 30 - August 14, 1984.** Host: John Bergen
10. **Romantisches Deutschland Post Conference** Host: Elisabeth Peters

Contact: John Schroeder, Ruth Wiebe, Lori Neufeld, Hilda Driedger.

For complete details on these tours, please call:

ASSINIBOINE TRAVEL SERVICE LTD.

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1-800-262-8893 (Toll-free outside Winnipeg)

Buller Films, Inc., a Mennonite film company out of Henderson, Neb., has received the CINE Golden Eagle award for its film *The Jewel Reclaimed*, which is about Church World Service work in Kampuchea.

"Local Peace Elves" placed two banners on 20-foot dirt piles at the core of the construction area at Consolidated Space Operations Center 20 miles east of Colorado Springs, Colo., on Oct. 9. Appealing to workers, the banners began, "We know you are creative *construction* workers and need jobs. . . ." One banner concluded, "But this job contract means *destruction* through space wars. Please stop now and build for peace." As part of Space Command, CSOC will be "the centerpiece of military space operations," according to Gen. James Hartinger, commander of Space Command.

The Intermenno Trainee Program, a one-year exchange program to Europe, is now accepting applications. The program gives North Americans between the ages of 19 and 27 the opportunity to spend a year abroad working and living with European Mennonites. To apply for the year that begins Aug. 1, 1984, write to MCC, 21 S. 12th, St., Akron, PA 17501, (717) 859-1151; or MCC Canada, 201-1483 Pembina Highway, Winnipeg, MB R3T 2C8, (204) 475-3550. Applications should be returned to MCC no later than Jan. 15, 1984.

RECORD

workers

Shuck

Smith

Tschurwald

Wilson

Roy Just has resigned as president of Columbia Bible Institute, Clearbrook, B.C., effective May 31, 1984.

Kathleen Shuck, Good Hope Lutheran Church, Bucyrus, Ohio, began a two-year MVS term on July 10 as music/recreation leader with the MVS unit in St. Catharines, Ont. A former music teacher in West Union, Ohio, and volunteer at Holden Village, Chelan, Wash., she is a 1980 graduate of Capital University, Columbus, Ohio. Her mother, Florence Shuck, lives in Bucyrus.

Cynthia Smith, Sixth Avenue Baptist Church, Tacoma, Wash., began a two-year MVS term on July 30 as office manager for the Center for Dispute Resolution in Denver. A 1983 graduate of the University of Puget Sound, Tacoma, with a bachelor's degree in politics and government, she is the daughter of Robert and Elizabeth Smith of Portland, Ore.

Vernon and *Pat Stelzer*, First Church, Lima, Ohio, have begun a two-year voluntary service assignment with Mennonite Central Committee in Kitchener, Ont., where they will serve in maintenance and clerical work in the House of Friendship. Their parents are Carrie Stelzer of Wapakoneta, Ohio, and Martha Smith of Bluffton, Ohio.

Mona Tschurwald, Hope United Methodist Church, Frakes, Ky., began a two-year MVS term on Aug. 22 as a referral counselor with the Downtown Emergency Service Center in Seattle. A 1980 graduate of the University of Wisconsin, Eau Claire, with a bachelor's degree in social work, she has most recently served as a relief houseparent for abused teenagers in Frakes. Her parents are Ronald and Sally Tschurwald of New London, Wis.

Brian Wilson, Fairfield (Pa.) Church, began a two-year MVS term on June 6 as a child-care worker at Franklin Children's Center and Children's Common Ground in Kansas City, Kan. A 1980 graduate of Bluffton (Ohio) College and professional photographer, he is the son of William and Lois Wilson of Biglerville, Pa.

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which is Jesus Christ.

1 Corinthians 3:11

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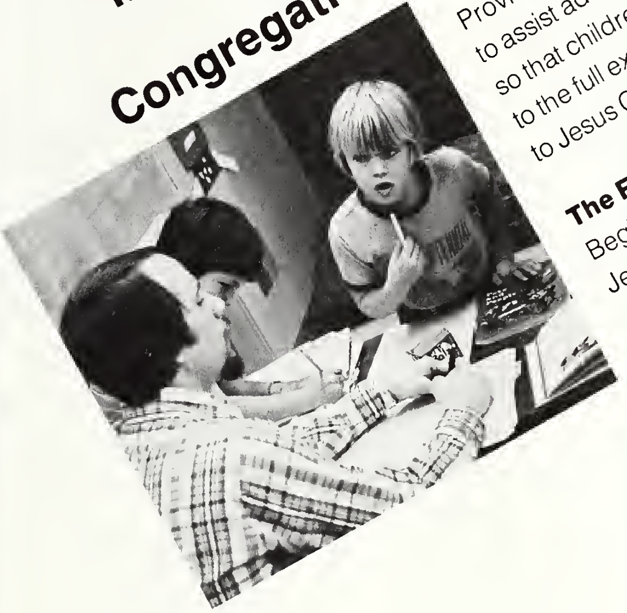

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LETTERS

Are we learning anything?

After reading about the homosexual issue for what seems to be the 20th time, I share a few thoughts. This debate over homosexuality seems to bring out the most emotional, anger-laden and hostile emotions over anything that has appeared in the pages of this magazine. What difference does it make?

For all those clamoring for the church to take a harder-line view, I wonder if they are aware of history? Any passing survey of Protestant, Catholic or Jewish thought will indicate that the majority of thinkers and church pronouncements have condemned homosexuality on the basis of Paul in Romans 1 and other passages in his writings and on basis of the Old Testament (the basis for Jewish thought). The American Psychiatric Association considered homosexuality a disease/sickness/deviant behavior until 1973; in counseling and psychological literature the vast majority still consider homosexuality as a deviant behavior. The military establishment of the country is probably more threatened by homosexuality than any other institution, isolating or discharging the individual at once if he or she is found to be homosexual. One need only go back to the McCarthy era to see the results of intolerance—mass invasion of privacy, loss of employment and damage to one's reputation and character—to find precedents for what is happening today.

The past four years, since the Iranian hostage situation and economic problems, have brought an enormous increase in racism, intolerance and hatred of the poor. In parts of the South, membership is increasing in the Ku Klux Klan, and the Nazi party seems to be more vocal (march on Skokie, Ill., and murders of civil rights activists in North Carolina). Along with tension has come increased intolerance of homosexuals.

Have we Anabaptist/Mennonite Christians forgotten that a short time ago we were persecuted, intimidated and harassed for our beliefs? Even though we reject the state or act of homosexuality, how can we join in any type of action or movement that such fascist, totalitarian groups would have us pursue? If people can be singled out and condemned merely because they are different, then I fear Mennonites may be next.

My orientation is not homosexual, but I can identify with them in that being a single person I know the hurt of prejudice and difficulty in being considered different. In all, I have known two or three homosexuals in my life; they wanted only to be left alone, to practice their own view of sexuality and not bother anyone else. Have not we as Anabaptist/Mennonites ever asked the same rights to practice what we believe?

With the threat of a nuclear war looming on the horizon, there are more pressing issues, such as peacemaking. Also, with so many of our brothers and sisters unemployed, could we not use our time to help, support and minister to the needy in our own midst? *Steve Dick, 200 Carolyn, Eureka, IL 61530*

Oct. 18

Can you help us grow?

The San Francisco Chinese Mennonite Church is the first Chinese Mennonite church in the United States. We are proud that we are Mennonites even though we faced a lot of misunderstandings when we first established our church. The people kept asking us, "Are you part of the Mormons?" Or they asked, "Who are the Mennonites and what do they believe?"

We began services on Nov. 9, 1980, in a rented auditorium from the Presbyterian Church. They charge us $490 a month to use the church two days a week. But we have activities such as evangelistic meetings, Thanksgiving parties, etc. They charge us up to $135 each additional evening.

The problem is not how much money we have to pay but how little room we can use. The auditorium is our sanctuary and it is only big enough for 70 people. We thank the Lord that we have more than 70 people—sometimes up to 90. And the church is still growing; more and more new people come.

We can only use the social hall for our Sunday school. It is only big enough for three classes. We do not have enough dividers to separate the classes. Some of the classes are too big and they need to divide into two classes. Another reason to divide classes is because not all the students are at the same level. While all the classes are having their lessons, they interrupt each other because they are so close.

San Francisco has more than 200,000 Chinese, and we are located in the Chinese residential community called Chinatown. If we have our own church we can do a lot more for the Lord. Because of this we tried to look for our own building.

We have found a three-story building just two blocks from our present meeting place. The building has a permit for church use. The owner asks $220,000, a reasonable price in San Francisco. Several other organizations want to buy the building, and they are willing to pay more than $220,000, but the owner is the Chinese Christian Missionary Alliance Church. They want to reserve the property for us if we can come up with the money.

We want to build a strong Mennonite church in San Francisco. We need your brotherly help. The Lord loves the whole world; he loves you and he loves the Chinese. One fourth of the world's population is Chinese. We are fellow workers in Christ and need help. The Bible says, "And who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this" (Esther 4:14 KJV).

If you have any letter or words of encouragement, please send to *San Francisco Chinese Mennonite Church, 195 Skyline Drive, Daly City, CA 94015*, or call *(415) 994-6438.*

Oct. 21

What if Holy Spirit is she?

Dick Rempel (letter, Oct. 11 issue) indicated he found it hard to sing in the song "Many Gifts," line 3, "Spirit gives each as *it* chooses." He and others might be interested to learn the history of that phrase and some biblical facts.

When Patty Shelly wrote the song, she wrote it the way it was printed in *Assembly Songs*. When the song was printed in *Sing and Rejoice*, the editor was unhappy with the Holy Spirit being referred to as "it" and had the wording revised to "he." The original wording was thus used in this recent printing of the song.

Now for the biblical facts. In the New Testament the Spirit is generally referred to in the neuter gender in the Greek.

Many English translations have not followed the original Greek text in changing these references to the masculine pronouns. In the Old Testament, Rempel may be surprised to learn, the Spirit is generally referred to by the feminine gender. What would singers at Bethlehem '83 have said if the song had been written to say, "Spirit gives each as *she* chooses"?

We have been too strongly masculine oriented in our thinking about the various expressions of God. *David Habegger, 2457 Perry, Wichita, KS 67204*

Oct. 24

Peace and justice theme was focus

Emory Wedel

The sixth assembly of the World Council of Churches held in Vancouver July 25-Aug. 10 brought together a large international constituency on the theme "Christ, the Life of the World."

On the first evening, cries for justice came from the people of Central America. Christians from every corner of the globe were asked to "choose life" on behalf of their desperate brothers and sisters whose lives are endangered and threatened by U.S. military action in the region. The appeal by Nicaraguans, Guatemalans, Salvadorans and Brazilians continued to ring passionately throughout the assembly.

Julia Esquival, a Guatemalan poet and ecumenical writer living in exile, exclaimed that in Guatemala there is genocide. She said it is not possible to explain what is going on in Guatemala because you cannot describe the essence of evil. She spoke of 250 massacres in the past year leaving about 12,000 people dead. Esquival urged concerned Christians to come into solidarity with Central American people by keeping informed, giving financial support, praying, and by studying U.S. foreign policy and writing to Congress. Our duty as Christians, she stressed, is to know what is happening and not to say, "I don't know what or who to believe."

Similar cries for justice came from various other countries, including the Philippines, Ireland, South Africa, Israel and others. WCC host British Columbia heard strong declarations about the injustices suffered by the aboriginal people of Canada. The development schemes of public and private enterprise have seriously altered Canadian Indian life and culture. Colonial "developments" have not included in any meaningful way the hopes, aspirations and needs of the Indian people, said chief Rob Robinson.

The conference schedule was filled with cultural events, films and panel discussions on themes like "Violence or Non-Violence," "The Myth of Scarcity," "Strategies for Stopping the Arms Race," "Peace and Justice Movements" and others. Some familiar people on various panels were Randall Forsberg, Jim Douglass, Coretta Scott King, Ron Sider and John Howard Yoder.

In a panel discussion called "The Deterrence Debate," John Habgood of England said that deterrence is an inherently unstable game of threat . . . based on fear. He did say, though, that he believes some form of deterrence is necessary.

On the other hand, Ron Sider called for the abolition of nuclear weapons and said we should see democracy as something we're willing to die for but not to kill for.

Helen Caldicott, a physician, mother of three and organizer of an active nuclear-awareness group called Physicians for Social Responsibility, compared the earth to a terminally ill patient with nuclear weapons being the cancer which is spreading rapidly. She said the U.S. military forces think of nuclear weapons like toys and explained how jealousy and competition among the army, navy and air force has caused enormous arms escalations. Caldicott referred to a talk she had with President Reagan in which he said that he believes the Russians are totally evil, godless communists. When she asked Reagan whether he had ever met a Russian, he said no. Caldicott called this "clinical paranoia," which she believes exists in the minds of both nations' leadership.

The European Peace movement was represented by Laurens Hogebrink of the Netherlands Reformed Church and Interchurch Peace Council. He urged the WCC to support strongly the efforts of the Western peace movement. Hogebrink mentioned that the arms race is being run so that the two superpowers can use their conventional weaponry to do anything they please in the Third World. Central America, he said, has been fabricated into an East-West conflict by the U.S. government to continue the arms race and conventional U.S. intervention there . . . while in actuality it is much more a North-South conflict.

Metropolitan Gregorios of the Syrian Orthodox Church in Delhi expressed his concern about the Western peace movement working for peace without working for justice. John H. Yoder essentially supported this claim during a panel discussion by saying that the Western peace movement doesn't bear the cross of Christ; rather it is for common sense survival. This is the reason why many Christians in the Third World are concerned that the issue of peace in the West is being separated from the issue of justice. The assembly was reminded by Third World voices and others of the biblical understanding of justice from Jesus as well as the Old Testament prophets. Prosperity and wealth cannot buy or maintain peace and it cannot exist without social justice because any peace built on injustice is not peace.

Third World participants illustrated this peace/justice separation by coming down hard on U.S. foreign policy, a policy in which multinational corporations are protected by the U.S. military so that U.S. economic interests can be served. A Philippine delegate said that they are controlled by the multinationals and are living under the gun of U.S. military forces and plead for WCC help. Likewise, a Canadian Indian and a Brazilian declared that it has been the indigenous people of the world who have suffered and suffer now from colonialization by the First World. The church has been involved in this oppressive colonialism, they said, and should be an institution involved in restructuring the economic order and giving compensation to oppressed indigenous peoples of the world.

Some Third World people were vocal about how over consumptive and wasteful the Western lifestyle has become. This was illustrated vividly by the "waste" generated at the conference. Styrofoam, glass, tin and paper were all thrown into the garbage without thought given to how such irresponsible use of resources relates to justice and inevitably breeds conflict.

Peace is not only the absence of war, these participants said. It means the end of starvation and everyday oppression. It means the end of devastation to the natural world. It requires the destruction of social structures in which the few end up with power and privilege while the many are attacked by poverty, patriarchy and ecological poisoning.

Personal reflections. With a simple phone call I found out that almost everything except Styrofoam was being recycled in the Vancouver area. In response, a friend and I ended up taking a van load of paper, tin and glass to a nearby recycling depot. I've heard reports from Bethlehem '83 that waste there was also excessive but was blindly accepted be-

A little girl clings to her doll as she looks out from a squatters camp in the black township of Crossroads near Capetown, South Africa. Nearly 10,000 people live in the small shack and tent enclave, with the full approval of the apartheid government.

cause "that's just the way it is."

A South African Methodist minister at WCC said we in the West choose to overconsume and waste. Just like we choose to buy products from oppressive multinationals who grow food and luxury crops on African soil while landless peasants go hungry. These corporations thrive because we, the Western consumer, choose to unjustly overconsume.

Because we live in such a mobile world we must think of ourselves as global citizens. Justice begins by seeing our interconnectedness with all of life and understanding how our lifestyles—the way we live, what we consume, etc.—affect our world neighbors and the natural environment. In our present society it seems we know of nothing other than waste and exploitation of resources. We are manipulated by advertising to buy and possess things we don't need, and we end up driving a car to travel one mile, flushing five gallons of precious water to rid a pint of urine, eating highly processed food from multinationals, drinking out of Styrofoam cups and ending up weekly with a mountain of garbage. These have become the acceptable standards of the affluent society, and for many Christians in the West this is the symbol of godliness. In truth this lifestyle is destructive to people and nature and contrary to the will of God. Because evil in traditional social structures is so strong, we must challenge these standards of living and consuming in light of biblical understanding rather than social acceptance.

Realization that personal, social and even world problems in the end actually boil down to the way we choose to live is an important understanding. This will begin to make us examine our living habits more closely. This also, I believe, can move us to repentance, which is not only being sorry but making a turnaround in the way we live and relate.

Doing justice and working for peace begins at home with the way we relate to all people and the earth. Simplicity of life means absence of waste, luxury and extravagance. A person committed to a simple/sustainable lifestyle conserves natural and human resources, be they materials, food, fossil fuel, soil, water, wildlife or the physical and psychological health of individuals and communities.

Christano speaks of MWC XI

Editor's note: Charles Christano, president of Mennonite World Conference, gave the following preview of the 1984 Mennonite World Conference assembly to interviewer Lois Barrett during his recent visit to North America. The visit included speaking in August at Bethlehem '83, the joint meeting of the General Conference Mennonite Church Triennial Sessions and the Mennonite Church General Assembly.

Christano is pastor of a congregation of the United Muria Christian Church in the city of Kudus (population 420,000), Indonesia.

Question: What can people expect when they attend Mennonite World Conference in Strasbourg, France, in 1984?

Christano: The theme "God's People Serve in Hope" is very timely. The problems are not just in the Third World but also in the Western Hemisphere. So we all need hope.

We are expecting 6,500 participants, 50 percent of them from North America, about 3,000 from Europe and the rest from Central and South America, Africa and Asia. There will also be other evangelical participants from Europe besides Mennonites. Other evangelical Christian homes are inviting Mennonites to stay, since Strasbourg has only a small Mennonite community. In all of France there are only 2,500 Mennonites.

For me, Mennonite World Conference is like a family reunion. It's very emotional for me when I see Africans embracing Europeans and Asians.

I don't want to be apologetic about the celebrative aspect of Mennonite World Conference. That by itself is a good witness. But there will also be work groups on such subjects as peace, the role of women, justice, outreach and evangelism. There will be Bible study in depth. The German and Dutch Mennonites especially look forward to that. They will provide Bible study materials.

Mennonite World Conference sessions will also expose European Mennonites to the larger Mennonite community. It can be exciting but also threatening to be with other Mennonites who are different from you.

Many of the differences are more cultural than theological. In Honduras I attended worship services where people threw up their hands and sang with gusto. That's part of the Latin culture. It's wrong for us to be judgmental.

Question: What are the common denominators among Mennonites around the world?

Christano: The believers' church. That is at the foreground, definitely.

The community type of fellowship. That's not so strange for me, coming from an Oriental background. But in the West, Mennonites have a sense of community others don't always have.

The concern for God's *shalom* is noticeable. But we must grant other Mennonites room for a slightly different interpretation. In the Latin American, African and Asian contexts, how many Christians are involved in revolutionary movements? Mennonites are reinterpreting and contextualizing the Anabaptist vision.

In certain areas in Latin America and Africa some young Mennonites are being drafted. Some suffer, pay a high cost and are put in prison. There is no voluntary service privilege in the new nations.

When those people compromise, how easy it is for others to say, "You're not consistent!" But they think about their wives, children, livelihood, even the church. What does it mean to be consistent and be put behind bars, to lose one's job and not be able to sustain the education of your children? Under totalitarian governments, where there is no alternative [to military service], you can argue until you're blue in the face, and the government won't change. You can be dead or you can stay alive and be yeast.

It's easy for North Americans to talk about being a good Mennonite, not taking up arms. But what about those who live in a situation where they cannot appeal for justice?

We cannot go to Washington and point fingers. In many countries, when you talk about anything which sounds a minor chord when others are singing the major, you will be silenced. What do you say to a militaristic government when it sends the Gestapo to you, taking your loved ones in the night? To keep on talking and be shot is the easiest way. If someone doesn't fear death, is he courageous enough to live? It takes more courage to live in an impossible situation. Does *satyargraha* [Gandhi's term for the truth-force in non-violent direct action] work in relationship to a junta government? We need to listen and try to understand.

Question: Isn't Mennonite World Conference one way to build relationships among Mennonites with diverse views on peace and other issues?

Christano: Sometimes long after the Mennonite World Conference assembly is over, I read the newspaper. Suddenly these stories from around the world are not about faceless people because I have met real people with names and prayed together with them. My concern becomes more intense and genuine. That's what I look for among other things—people sharing meals and hopes.

I recently saw a letter from a Ghanaian Mennonite whom I learned to know. He wrote that the price of a 500-kilogram bag of rice is now $275 (U.S.). He eats only one meal a day so his children can have more. We have never experienced this kind of scarcity. Last night I saw all the taillights of cars leaving the conference. We waste so much energy while part of our fellowship cannot eat but one meal a day.

In Mennonite World Conference we do not come from the same culture, yet we are close to one another. How grateful I am to be involved in this community!

Besides Mennonite World Conference assembly, as another way of Mennonites getting to know each other, we decided to move the Mennonite World Conference executive committee meetings from one continent to another. We met in Europe in Strasbourg in 1979; in Osaka, Japan, in 1980; in Nairobi, Kenya, in 1981; and in San Pedrosula, Honduras, in 1983. We have put onto the next agenda that by 1987 we hope the committee can meet in Paraguay.

Mennonite World Conference helps create a feeling of family. There was such concern over my travel and visa problems going to Honduras. I am comforted to know that people care for me.

We see Indian Mennonites getting closer to each other. Years ago, Mennonites in India were closer to the different MC, GC and MB groups in North America than they were to each other.

The question for Mennonite World Conference is, How can we with different institutions coexist and supplement each other?

We can become bridge builders.

Lois Barrett, interviewer for this Meetinghouse article, is a free-lance writer and a pastor at Mennonite Church of the Servant, Wichita, Kan.

MEDITATION

Did you give thanks?

". . . give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you" (1 Thessalonians 5:18).

It was the 5:30 supper bell and 150 students headed toward the dining hall. As the first students reached the doors, the word was out: "It's leftovers again."

"We're going out for pizza . . . meet you at the local take-out," was heard across the campus as many of the students dispersed. Those of us who couldn't afford to eat out shuffled to our tables with the usual laughter, joking and loud complaining (especially about the type and quality of the food being served).

We did not immediately notice that the host of the week had walked up to the microphone at the head of the half-empty hall. He stood in silence waiting for the squabbling to subside. Some students righteously bowed their heads to acknowledge the ritualistic grace. But he only said, "If you're thankful, you may eat."

Betty Klassen

Thanksgiving Eve

As I pushed open the door and stepped out into a dark, cold night, a blast of wind and snow hit my face. Although it was only November, winter had arrived early, as it sometimes does in Minnesota. It was the night before Thanksgiving, and I had dismissed my evening composition class early because of the holiday and because my students were anxious about driving home. Snow had been falling lightly several hours earlier when we arrived on campus, and the weather forecasters predicted possible severe conditions.

Once in my car, I easily followed the car tracks of my students who had preceded me. But out of the parking lot, I discovered no one else had gone the road I needed to go. The county road was white and blank. How was I to make it home if I couldn't see the road? Going back was out of the question. The campus buildings were now locked for the night. Gripping the wheel, peering through the flying snow and praying hard, I made it over that half mile of curving road to the highway.

But even there a trackless expanse lay before me. How could this be on a normally well-traveled highway? The wind and snow were combining forces to obliterate all signs of human presence within minutes after the tracks were made.

Ditches marked the extreme boundaries of the roadway, but I could see no sign of the edges of the pavement. Creeping along in that blaze of white, I begged God to lead me those 15 miles home.

Then in the distance ahead I saw two faint red lights—the taillights of a semi. I cautiously increased my speed enough to move closer to the truck. There I stayed, mile after mile, following those two red dots, trusting that the truck driver—from his higher vantage point and greater experience of bad road conditions—would keep me on the road.

As we drove north toward the city, the snow decreased. By the time we crossed the Mississippi, the roadway was once again decipherable from its surroundings. There the truck took another route, but I could find my way home through the streets of the city, grateful to God for his careful leading through the twinkling red lights of the truck.

Arlene Koch Holdeman

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Lounge

[redacted]

EDITORIAL

One returned to give thanks

Misery loves company. Ask the Christians in the Soviet Union. During their decades of dispersion, famine and persecution, there were no Mennonites, Baptists, Pentecostals, Orthodox or Lutherans; only believers—all in one house—meeting in secret to study, pray and worship. In times of forest fires, you can suddenly see natural enemies running side by side. Family bickering subsides when tragedy comes.

Luke 17:11-19 tells of Jesus—en route to Jerusalem—entering a village near the border between Samaria and Galilee. From a distance (William Barclay suggests some authorities demanded lepers stay at least 50 yards from healthy people) 10 lepers shout at Jesus, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us" (v. 13).

I doubt the lepers really expect anything. That they are a group of 10 and include a Samaritan among them suggests they have been ill together for a long time. Coming as close to the village as they dare is probably the nearest thing to adventure in their lives. They are accustomed to scorn and being treated as unclean non-people. Their home is probably a cave or a shack.

But when you are labeled a nobody, you have nothing to lose. Besides, there are rumors of healing. May as well try it, they think. So they holler their plea.

Jesus looks at them. Seemingly moved to his usual compassion for those who are down, he immediately says, "Go and show yourselves to the priests" (v. 14).

What to do now? The 10 know they will not get past the Temple gates. Will any priest risk infection by coming to see them? Is this another game to make them feel more like nothing?

When options become all or nothing, you usually go for the all. They drag their mutilated bodies, pain piercing everywhere at each step, perhaps feeling more like a condemned person's last steps before the final, brutal end. No hope and no alternative.

Suddenly, along that miserable path of dodging the curious and the cursers, an incredible feeling comes into them. One lets out a whoop. Others stare at their companions. Eyes fill with a liquid of unbelief, amazement and joy. Their feet feel as if the sharp rocks have turned to fleecy clouds. They are healed.

One immediately turns around and runs back to Jesus—to thank him. And he is a Samaritan.

Well, of course, what can you expect? The Samaritan doesn't see the Temple as so important. He is naturally the first to come back.

After showing themselves to the priests, the other nine will come leaping and singing and praising the Lord. They wait, but nobody else shows.

Then Jesus speaks, "Were not 10 cleaned? Where are the nine? Was no one found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?" (vv. 17-18).

Can you and I imagine it? Surely this could not happen to us.

But it happens every day. We take it for granted that we will have food, work, shelter, family, church and friends. When tragedy strikes, we pause for a moment. We even go to the temple. Within a few days or weeks, occasionally years, our habit patterns return.

Some—a rare few—return to the Lord for worship and to seek a closer connection. That's gratitude—not to bow low 20 times over but to get to know Jesus better, to learn from him of the Holy Spirit who is able to sustain us in sorrow and in joy.

Art Linkletter once asked a young girl, "What is salt?" She replied, "Salt is what spoils the potatoes when you leave it out."

What is gratitude? Gratitude is what hurts your character when you leave it out. It ruins relationships and sours life when you don't return to give thanks.

One took the step—a turnaround to go to Jesus—and received a special blessing (v. 19).

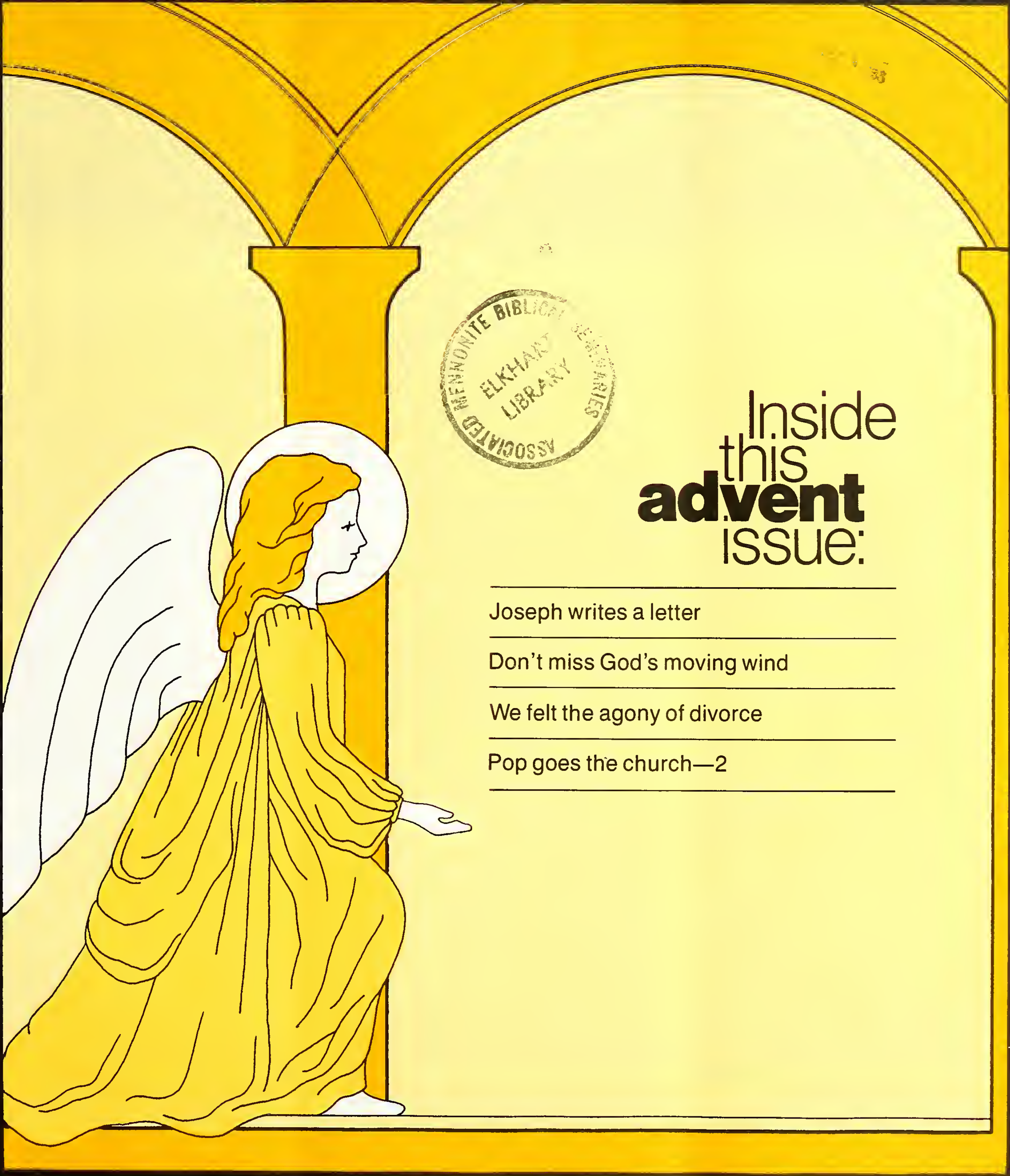
One returned to give thanks. He seemed to realize that wholeness is more than a cured illness—it's *thanks-living.*

In case you have not returned in gratitude, you are robbing yourself. Jesus wants to heal your deepest need—to be somebody special and to know it. *Bernie Wiebe*

THE MENNONITE

OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST

98:25 DECEMBER 6, 1983



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Inside this advent issue:

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Pop goes the church—2

Joseph writes a letter

Vera Boldt

Dear Zechariah,

I am writing to you because you will be the most likely person to understand the many strange things that have happened to Mary and me. I have to talk to someone. Most people would scoff at the things I have to say and suggest they are products of a deranged mind. But you too have seen and experienced miraculous things recently.

You too were visited by an angel with wonderful but disturbing news. Who would have believed that you and Elizabeth could have a son in your old age? The angel correctly foretold his coming. My story also begins with the visit of an angel.

One evening Mary and I had been discussing our wedding plans. We were both very happy because I had finally saved up enough money to make our marriage possible. Ever since I met Mary I had saved up every spare mite for our wedding day.

It was spring and the evening was warm and alive with the fresh smell of growing plants and damp earth. We walked along the deserted road in Nazareth—talking and planning. We would be married in three months. Jacob, Mary's father, had agreed. It would give Mary time to do some sewing and Jacob time to save a few more farthings for a dowry. We said goodnight quite late and agreed to meet early the next morning by the well.

The next morning I was awakened early by loud knocking on my door. "Who could that be?" I thought. "A customer wanting some carpentry work done in a hurry?" I got up and stumbled to the door.

Mary's father stood there, ashen faced.

"Mary's gone," he said.

"Gone? What do you mean?"

"Gone to visit her kinswoman Elizabeth. She left us a note. I thought you might be able to explain her sudden whim."

"Why no, Jacob, I can't imagine why she would leave now. We were planning our wedding. Something must have happened last night after I left her. She loves me; I know it. Nothing can come between us. Whatever could have happened? Oh, I hope God will protect her; I pray that he will."

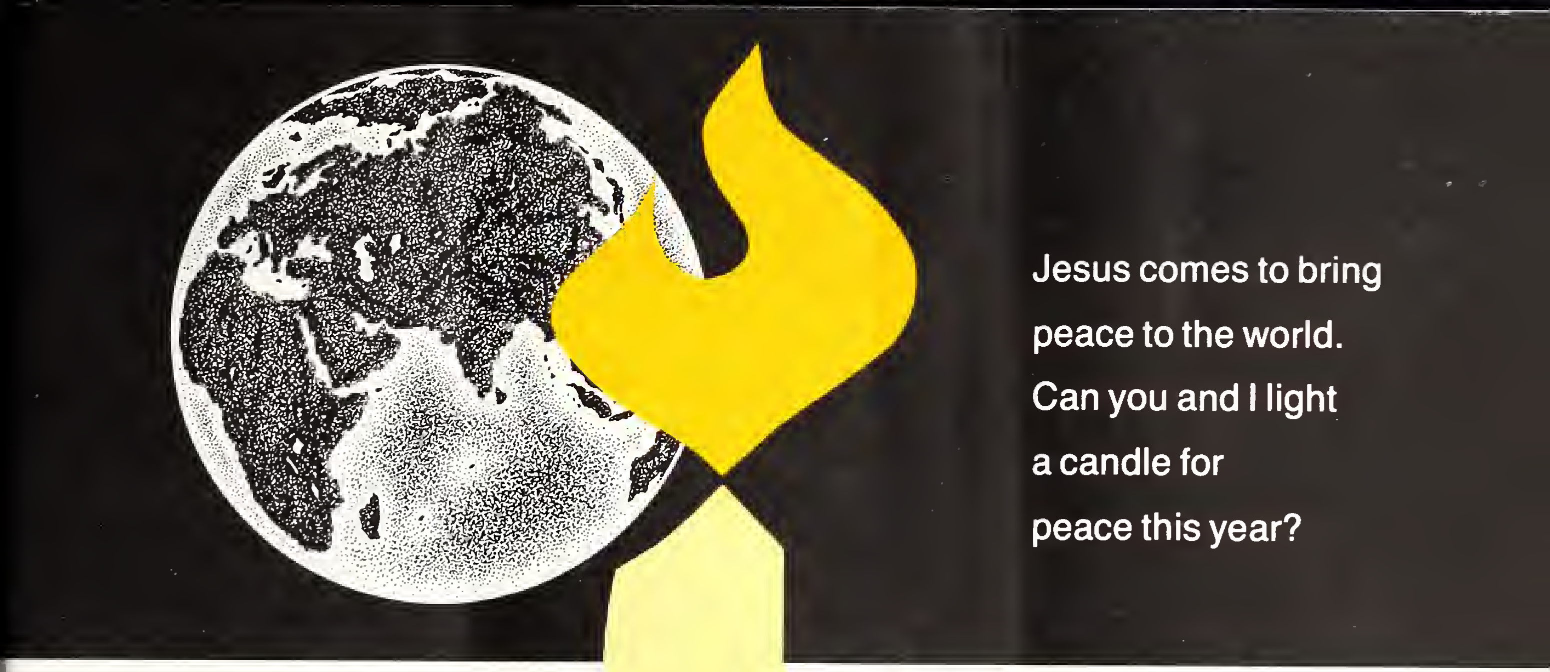
Well, you know, Zechariah, that God did protect Mary. She arrived safely at your home and stayed with you for three months. Mary told you—before she told me or her parents—of the visit of the angel to her that night before she left, and the wonderful yet disturbing news he brought: She was to conceive of the Holy Spirit and be the mother of our Messiah. She was sure you and Elizabeth would believe her and not so sure that I or her own parents would be able to give credence to this wonderful happening.

I waited impatiently for Mary's return. My mind was a sea of turbulent thoughts. Why had she left at this time? Why was she staying so long? I even thought occasionally that she might have regretted our betrothal, but that only momentarily. My faith in our love and God's blessing soon returned.

Finally the day came. Mary had come back to Nazareth. Jacob came to tell me one evening as I ate my supper of bread and curds with a cup of milk.

"Mary wants to see you," he said. "Come as soon as you can."

"I'll come as soon as I have washed, Jacob." Hastily I finished my meal, washed myself and combed my hair and



Jesus comes to bring
peace to the world.
Can you and I light
a candle for
peace this year?

beard. With trembling hands I put on my best clothes.

"Please, God," I whispered, "make everything go well."

I walked quickly through the dusk toward Jacob and Anna's house. They too had been wondering about Mary's prolonged absence and must now be relieved that she had returned.

When I entered Jacob and Anna's small home, the rushlights in the living quarters flickered on the walls and ceiling of the square room. Mary's face by turns gleamed and retreated in the shadows created by the inconstant lights. She was pale and her dark eyes looked enormous.

"Joseph," she said, "there is something I have to tell you. I am with child."

"What?" I gasped, ". . . what do you mean?"

"I am going to have a baby."

"That's impossible. We haven't—I mean—"

"Joseph, be calm. It is not what you think. I am still a virgin."

"How can this be? The elders will never believe—"

"Hush, Joseph. Listen. On the night before I left to visit Elizabeth I came home from our walk. Remember how happy we were?"

"Yes."

"Well, I came into our house. My parents were on the roof enjoying the spring air and I was alone in the room. It was dark and I knelt to say my prayers. Suddenly there was a bright light in the room and an angel stood there."

"An angel?" I gasped.

"Yes, at first I was frightened. But he said, 'Do not be afraid,' and then he said that the Holy Spirit would come upon me, and the power of the Most High would overshadow me and I would become the mother of the Promised One."

Now, Zechariah, you have heard the story from Mary's own lips. She said you and Elizabeth believed her because of your similar experience—well-known to us all.

However, I must admit I was shocked and bewildered. Why has no angel reassured me? Did I not count? I had to think. I needed time.

"I must think, Mary. Tomorrow we will talk."

"Then peace be with you, Joseph."

"And the Lord be unto you, Mary."

Thus we parted.

Zechariah, I must tell you that that was the most difficult night of my life.

What was this my Mary was asking me to believe? That a virgin was to have a child? That this child was to be God's Son? That this child was the long-awaited Messiah? That Mary was entrusted with the care of this holy child? That we were chosen among thousands to be the ones to nurture the Son of God?

Zechariah, I felt a doubt and anguish of soul that night. I could not accept the miraculous story. I forgot about your experience. I should have remembered that you also had been an unlikely receiver of God's favor and confidence.

At any rate I decided not to raise a scandal. I would have Mary put away privately and have the marriage contract set aside quietly. I asked God to give peace to our souls. Finally, near dawn, I fell asleep.

And then, Zechariah, it came. It was a dream, yet more than a dream. It seemed so real. The angel of the Lord came to me. Oh, what an experience! He was so kind, so patient, so understanding. "Joseph," he said, "do not be afraid to take Mary home with you as your wife. It is by the Holy Spirit that she has conceived this child. She will bear a son, and you shall give him the name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." Then the dream ended.

Slowly I awakened. At first I could not understand why I had a feeling of utter peace and contentment. Then it came to me. I remembered the dream. Incredible joy filled my heart. I knelt and thanked God for his revelation to me.

Zechariah, I am now full of confidence and joy. Mary and I are waiting eagerly for the arrival of the child. We will bring up this holy child, with God's help, in the way of the Lord.

Zechariah, I had to write you this letter to share my feelings with someone who would understand. But what will the future bring? How will the coming of this child affect our lives, everyone's lives, the future of humankind? We are waiting. The whole world unknowingly waits with us. Peace be unto you and Elizabeth.

Your friend,
Joseph

The Holy Spirit usually moves in subtle breezes and gusts that surprise us.

Don't miss

God's moving wind

Dennis Webber

Wind. Folks from the western prairies take wind for granted. My wife, Loretha, and I moved from the isolated, windswept plains of South Dakota to innercity Dallas. Even after the culture shock, something seemed so different—something usual was missing. Suddenly one day we realized the difference in the city: no constant, steady, noisy, bothersome wind. No longer the need to walk at a 45° angle, to clutch papers and clothing so tightly, to raise your voice to be heard above the gale. Our lives were different because we had left the influence of the wind.

Since moving back to South Dakota and now to Montana, I've learned to live with my old friend the wind again. It is my constant companion—welcomed or not.

Isn't it interesting that Jesus in his witnessing visitation with Nicodemus compares his Spirit to the wind? "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not marvel that I say, 'You must be born again.' The wind blows where it wishes and you hear the sound of it, but do not know where it comes from and where it is going; so is everyone who is born of the Spirit" (John 3:6-8 NASB).

When I ponder how the Holy Spirit is moving in our small country church, how he is moving in your church and others in our far-flung conference, I finally start to understand Jesus' analogy of the wind. The Holy Spirit usually moves not in hurricane force, but rather in subtle breezes and gusts that surprise us by their gradual, persistent presence. I thought of three ways I feel (for we first feel the wind, then see its results) the Holy Spirit is moving in Bethlehem Mennonite Church and in many churches in our districts.

1. The movement of cooperation. Bethlehem was without a pastor for about a year, as John and Sarah Arn and family followed the call of God's Spirit to Taiwan. Pastor Jonas Beachy of nearby Red Top (MC) Mennonite Church filled the pulpit for eight months. The congregation had to share the load normally carried by a full-time pastor. More than one person has told me here, "Our church really came together during that year."

This was done in many ways, from cleaning the church to remodeling the parsonage, from more involvement in the worship service to running off the bulletins. The church board and other committees had more responsibilities. Tensions and differences were less than expected. A new closeness with the Red Top people developed.

Perhaps your church has gone through a crisis that turned into a blessing because of renewed commitment and cooperation. God's Spirit was moving like a steady northwest wind, hardly noticed until the dust settled and the effects of the wind were seen.

2. The movement of outreach. Bethlehem has four couples (including the Arns) involved in full-time mission work. The church's Ladies Mission Society, though small in number, was cited recently for its large percentage-wise giving and involvement. There has been an active association with Cheyenne ministries, MDS and MCC. Mission giving seems to have a special place in many of our people's budgets.

These facts aren't given to brag; you and your church have similar outreach efforts, many of which are greater in size and scope. The point is that interest in evangelism, discipleship training and ministry seems to be increasing, not diminishing as some have predicted in our high-tech, self-centered world. The Holy Spirit is moving ahead in outreach, in presenting the salvation and fullness of Jesus Christ, and we scarcely knew the wind had come up.

3. The movement of dependence. I am thinking here of dependence on God's will for our individual and collective lives, as revealed in the study of his Word, prayer and fellowship with him at specific times in our lives. I am being continually blessed at the hunger and openness for Scripture's answers among the people of Bethlehem and elsewhere in Mennonite circles.

Nothing gladdens a pastor or teacher's heart more after a message or lesson than the responses, "What is the Lord saying? What does this mean? How can I apply this to my life today?" This dependence on God's Spirit in private and public worship is the key to the other movements. Jesus said of the Spirit, "When he comes, he will guide you into all truth; for he will not speak on his own initiative, but whatever he hears he will speak; and he will disclose to you what is to come. He shall glorify Me, for he shall take of Mine, and shall disclose it to you" (John 16:13, 14 NASB).

The Spirit is moving us toward new trust in God, his Son and his Word, like a wind urging and pushing us forcibly ahead, hard against our backs, thrusting us forward.

Conclusions. I believe the Holy Spirit—God's comforting/confronting wind—is moving in Bethlehem's people, in many Christians' lives in our conference and beyond. (Neighbors get wind when we get wind; maybe we just can't hear their wind chimes clearly.) Sometimes as a gentle, cooling breeze, sometimes as a forceful blast, God's Spirit continues to reveal and honor Jesus—risen and glorified.

Perhaps we've missed some of his moving because we were unaware that the wind had come up. We may have been looking for too dramatic or too intense of a storm. Let's not miss out on the moving of the Spirit. On a calm day Montanans know the wind will be back soon. Should we look out the window and see if the trees and shrubs are swaying? Have we become so accustomed to God's Wind—the Spirit—that we are no longer moved and affected by his presence? Wind can't stand still, but we can. Let us follow God's moving wind, his Spirit. •

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ideas for Christmas

Is Christmas what we want it to be? Increasingly, the answer is no. In trying to find it, we look in all the wrong places. We want it to be a holy day but are frustrated to find it is the advent of Santa Claus rather than Jesus that claims most of our attention and energy. We want it to be a time of remembering the birth of Christ and its significance but are disappointed when we are so hurried and harried that we can only wish it to be over soon. We are embarrassed to find ourselves pressured into buying things for family and friends who don't really need them, while giving little attention to those whose needs are great.

These reflections are from Alternatives, a not-for-profit organization working in cooperation with a number of denominations to encourage more responsible ways of living through alternative celebrations. We suggest you send for their Christmas packet and share its contents with your church, children's teachers and any groups you work with. It is filled with ideas. *Christmas Packet @ $4.60 (U.S.), Alternatives, Box 1707, Forest Park, GA 30051.*

We are offering a few suggestions to direct your thinking to alternative giving and celebrating. Consider giving your time, your skills, your money to those Christ came to serve. For example, help with a senior citizen's lunch program, help with house chores for a shut-in, make a donation to a ministry among society's marginal and forgotten people. Send a gift card to a friend or relative announcing a gift of time, service or money in their name. And this year, consider using a live Christmas tree that can be planted in your yard or in a park after the holidays.

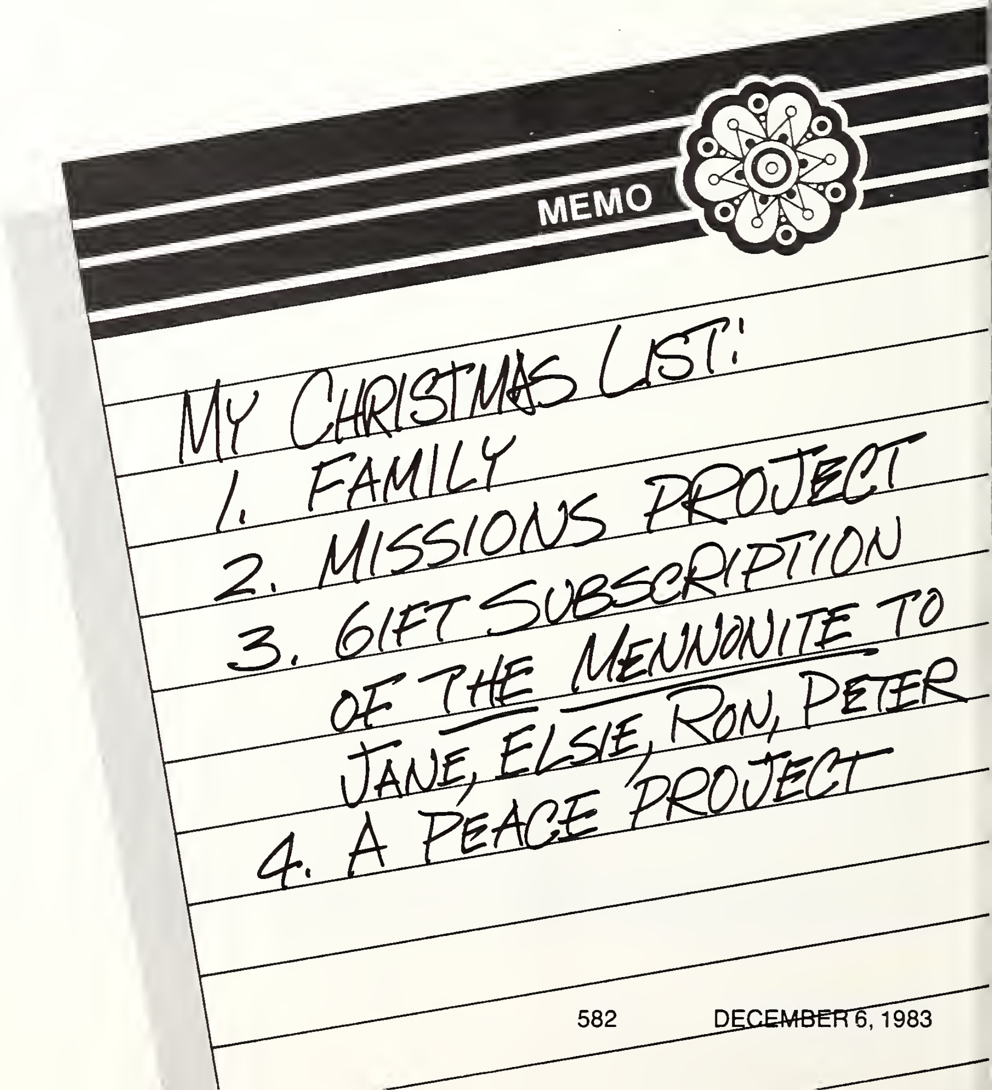
Consider making your own greeting cards or omit cards and write letters. One more card idea is to purchase cards from a group such as *Concern, Box 1790 Santa Ana, CA 92702*, or *Fellowship of Reconciliation, Box 271, Nyack, NY 10960.*

Here are a few gift suggestions that support excellent causes:

1. *Jubilee Crafts* is a group of Christians who import handcrafts made by the poor of the Third World, providing a small market for their products. Celebrating is what Jubilee Crafts is about. Jubilee, a season of rejoicing, of joy and justice. Send for a catalogue and send postage to *Jubilee Crafts, Box 12236, 300 W. Apsley St., Philadelphia, PA 19144*, or visit your local self-help store.
2. *Concern* now has 15 medical and health professionals working in five Third World countries. It costs approximately $6,000 to have a volunteer in the field. In order to continue this work and expand it they need to extend their financial base. *Concern, Box 1790, Santa Ana, CA 92702.*
3. *Ground Zero* is a non-violent organizing project to stop the Trident. In August they staged the first blockade of the USS *Ohio* as it came into port at Bangor, Wash., to take on nuclear missiles. They are dedicated, at personal risk, to stage future blockades to challenge this deadly force. *Ground Zero, Route 5, Box 5423, Poulsbo, WA 98370.*
4. Contact your nearest Mennonite Central Committee office and ask for gift project ideas. They can help you with ideas for children and adult groups. Show that you believe it is more blessed to give than to receive.
5. Contact your nearest conference office (district/provincial, regional or general) and ask for a project idea your family can support in place of giving so many gifts nobody will use. Choose a project in a needy part of your neighborhood or in the larger world. Instead of name exchanges of an elaborate nature, keep them simple. Then support a special project together by taking a gift offering for those not as fortunate as yourself.
6. Give a gift of *The Mennonite* to a shut-in person or friend. Send $12 (U.S.) or $13 (Canadian) to *The Mennonite, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114*, together with name and address for each gift you want to give. It'll be a gift that keeps on giving all year. Tell us if you want a gift notice enclosed.

It is our wish for you that Christmas will be the season of joy and generosity it is meant to be. We hope your favorite gifts might be those given in your name to those whose needs are great.

Give of yourself after the way God gave of himself.



Gideon: the more-with-less general

Darrell Fast

The Lord said to Gideon, "The men you have are too many for me to give them victory over the Midianites. They might think they had won by themselves. . ." (Judges 7:2 TEV).

A sick man got a prescription: "Take as much of this powder as stays on a dime, twice a day." Three days later, the patient came for more medicine. Greeted by surprise, he explained, "Well, I didn't have a dime, so I used two nickels."

In a sense this reflects our situation about weapons for war. We are addicted to them and believe more is better. We have lost our perspective and our understanding. And so the word of the Lord comes to us as to Gideon: "The weapons you have are too many for me to give you victory over your enemies; you might think you won by yourselves." For Gideon, *less* soldiers meant more trust in God. That is God's word to us about security. More weapons equal less security; less weapons equal more security.

The ideal defense for the people of God was first declared by Moses: "Don't be afraid. Stand your ground, and you will see what the Lord will do . . . you will never see these Egyptians again. The Lord will fight for you. . ." (Exodus 14:13, 14). God liberated his people.

Ever since, many leaders announce that God is on our side and will fight for us. But they also say God needs help.

Gideon acted on the belief God will do the defending for us. He dismantled his army. First, he handed out exemptions (Judges 7:3). Over two-thirds of his militia went home because they were afraid. Did they fear the Midianites with their new-fangled weapons (the domesticated camel gave great mobility)? Perhaps. But how would you respond to the exemption, "If you're afraid, go home; I don't need you"? I suspect I'd go. Perhaps they were afraid of their general's ability to lead. Psychology says most courageous people can admit their fear and own it. Gideon is left with one-third of an army too afraid to admit their fear.

But God tells Gideon there are still too many. Gideon works at it until only 300 are left of the original 32,000.

God gives Gideon extra assurance in the dream about the barley loaf knocking down the tent. He and his 300 soldiers proceed on their daring strategy.

Just like Martin Luther King, Jr., was called to be a modern Gideon, even so God calls us children of Menno to serve as more-with-less generals.

The sudden shout, the crashing pitchers and the flaming torches bring confusion to the Midianites. They mistake friend for foe and flee into the night.

In the next chapter Gideon becomes a general who kills Midianites and wreaks vengeance on two cities that refused his soldiers hospitality. However, Gideon is the only person in the Bible whom God called to be a military general. (Others were called to be prophets: Samuel, Moses, Isaiah, Amos; cf. Judges 6:11-16.)

Gideon did at least two unique things: (1) He refused to be crowned king because "the Lord will be your ruler" (Judges 8:22). (2) He showed a way of fighting based on trust in God rather than in weapons of destruction. Gideon was a "more-with-less" general who trusted in God. Even today—more than 3,000 years later—his example can show the way.

A. J. Muste, the great U.S. pacifist, once said, "The world waits for a great nation that has the common sense, the imagination and the faith to devote to the science and practice of non-violence, so much as a tenth of the money, brains, skills and devotion which it now devotes to the madness of war preparation. What is that nation waiting for before it undertakes its mission?"

I guess it is waiting for Gideons to lead the way, Gideons in the scientific communities, in the professions, in business, in trade unions, in the civil service and in the Defense Department, Gideons who believe that less is more. Our faith in weapons of destruction must be overcome by an active faith in God, which will make it possible for a new Gideon and his 300 followers to lead the way.

Then the Lord's angel came to Toronto and sat down beneath the C.N. Tower. A quiet child of Menno was busy in an office, afraid of being identified as peculiar and a pacifist. The angel said, "The Lord is with you, brave and mighty one."

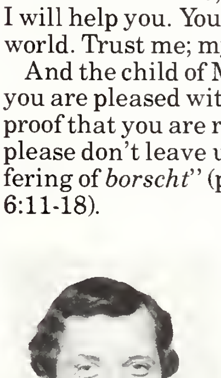
The child of Menno responded with surprise. "If I may ask, sir, why has all this happened to us if the Lord is with us? There are 50,000 nuclear bombs in the world, any one of which could destroy this city. But we have to have them, otherwise we would be at the mercy of the communists. The Lord is not with us."

Then the Lord said, "Go, with all your great strength and conviction, rescue the world from its addiction to weapons of destruction. You have lived in both Russia and America. I myself am sending you."

"But Lord, how can I disarm the world? My tribe is a minority people in the world and we are a small part of the Christians in America."

"Child of Menno, you can do it because I will help you. You will disarm the world. Trust me; my name is love."

And the child of Menno answered, "If you are pleased with me, give me some proof that you are really the Lord. And please don't leave until I bring you an offering of *borscht*" (paraphrase of Judges 6:11-18).



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We felt the agony of divorce

Karren Boehr

When the phone rang my kitchen was a disaster zone. Leftover pancakes and cereal bowls littered every square inch of the table. My toddler, in her highchair, was loudly demanding to know why her scrambled egg was taking so long to materialize. I was trying to hang on until everyone vanished and I could get the day put together. Quickly I scooped up the receiver, my abrupt hello obviously edged with impatience.

"Karren . . . it's Chad . . . Marla has filed for divorce." His voice broke with emotion.

My world snapped rudely to order. A sick feeling pounced upon the pit of my stomach. I motioned for my husband to take the extension.

We had known Chad and Marla from the time they were teenagers and considered them a part of our extended family. Their wedding had been a beautiful celebration in the Lord and, though they moved some distance away, we always managed to keep in touch.

We knew Chad and Marla started married life with heavy schooling debts and that Marla, rather than working, wanted more than anything to be a homemaker and a mother. We were aware too that their diversity of background was creating more of a problem than any of us had anticipated. But they both loved the Lord and were active in a church that was alive and growing.

For a long period we had heard nothing. And then came the phone call.

Chad didn't want the separation but claimed he hadn't been able to change Marla's mind. Would I please give her a call? Perhaps she would listen to someone else.

Feeling totally inadequate, I hesitated, then reluctantly agreed.

Later that day the reality and urgency of Chad's call began to grip me, and I frantically began digging into the Scriptures to renew in my mind Christ's words on divorce. I was determined to find out why so many Christians were beginning to bail out of troubled marriages, unable to tap the very source that had brought them together.

Most passages were clear and to the point. Except in the case of adultery, divorce was not an option. Confident Marla would bring her thinking into line, I rehearsed exactly what I would say. As a Christian she had to stick it out and, with the Lord's help, be willing to put things back together.

There are few more helpless feelings than to see a Christian couple you have known well experience the agony of divorce.

The phone rang a number of times before there was an answer. Marla's voice was hesitant, almost timid, and when I identified myself she became abruptly quiet. For several minutes we made small talk—the weather, her job, my kids.

"I suppose Chad's told you about the divorce," she suddenly blurted.

"Yes," I answered. "Sort of took us by surprise."

"It shouldn't have," she responded flatly. "The whole thing was a mistake to begin with. I've never really been happy. For five years I've been trapped in a living hell with nowhere to go. Now I've found a job that has given me the self-confidence and finances I need to make the break."

"Surely there's been some good times," I inserted hopefully. "Chad and you—"

"It's over!" Marla interrupted. "There's nothing left to pick up on. Chad and I have spent our entire married life tearing one another apart—bit by bit. Chad has never understood how I felt about anything. He's given me no breathing room." She began to cry softly. "I know I've destroyed him too . . . and I'm sorry about that. Now I just want out. I want to start living again."

I panicked as God took a giant eraser and, with one swipe, whooshed my original plan of attack into oblivion. Marla was disillusioned, completely broken. To bombard her with Scripture and pious advice would only add guilt to the struggles she was already carrying.

"Marla," I ventured cautiously, "you know Christ would really like to see you and Chad work this out."

"Every Christian friend I've ever made has been quoting verses to me," she snapped. "Romans 7, 1 Peter 3, Matthew 5; I've heard them all. I'm the bad guy, and they all let me know it. But they don't realize what I've been through. I don't even know who I am anymore." The tears were coming faster now. "I can't believe God would condemn me to hell for this. He knows I've tried. It's just over, that's all."

During the next several months our home was in frequent touch with both partners. Most of the time my husband and I just listened. Other times we simply called to reaffirm our love. On my knees, I agonized for the Lord to intervene. I wanted to save them the further heartache that results from deliberately choosing a path contrary to the will of God. I knew, regardless of Chad and Marla's decision, that God would still love them. Yet his first desire was for them to remain a unit. But was it possible?

The divorce went on as scheduled, the proceedings ravaging and cruel. Both Chad and Marla emerged with much bitterness and despair, brutally wounded in every area of their lives. The memories would last a lifetime.

In the lonely nights of intercession I wrestled again and again with the stand my husband and I continued to take, that of concerned support and love. Divorce was not a choice. Yet neither was turning our backs on two desperate people. I could only sit and wait and pray.

As the months went by, I watched other Christians in action. A caring fellowship of believers surrounded Chad with not only love but a temporary place to live and a car for transportation. Gently they helped him pray and work through the crippling destruction of his own self-worth. The flower that was crumpled began to bloom again.

Marla has not been so fortunate. Turning from her Christian friends, who had been quick to condemn, she sought comfort in the world with others who shared similar experiences. Tragically, her struggles remain.

Watching Chad and Marla pick up their battered lives has convinced me that God's people must stand by one another, not looking back at the past in condemnation but ahead into the future with hope. Only in the security of accepting fellowship can God totally, completely salvage the lives of both partners.

Marla's words, several months ago, haunt me about our churches. "When all my friends turned against me, you hung in there and really cared. You never knew it, but your love was all I had."

There are positive signs for marriages. Sandra Carter, co-author of Reaffirmation: Renewing Your Marriage Vows and Values, *says, "Divorces are leveling off; there's a whole new attitude. I see it everywhere. Couples are committed to working out their problems. They are aware . . . that intimacy and couple-closeness are precious and not something to throw away."*

NEWS

Peace sections discuss tax resistence, draft, inter

Akron, Pa. (MCC U.S.)—The threat of nuclear war, preparations for war and the appropriate way for committed Christians to say no were the threads uniting the various segments of discussions at the Mennonite Central Committee U.S. Peace Section meeting here Nov. 4-5.

While agreeing that the church has an important role to play in saying no to preparations for such an event, the members struggled with the place of military tax resistance as a method of saying no.

Several members observed that the constituency is "not of one mind on this matter," while Darrel Brubaker of Philadelphia, Brethren in Christ representative, urged that "here is one place we need to be leaders more than representatives."

After the matter was tabled overnight for further reflection, the group affirmed a recommendation commending the General Conference for the serious attention it has given the issue and urging churches to work more diligently at the process of prayerful discernment of their response to this issue.

The resolution also strongly encouraged constituents to initiate further action in support of the World Peace Tax Fund bill, which would provide a legal alternative to the payment of taxes for military purposes.

The section discussed a recent communication from Selective Service director Thomas K. Turnage, stating that agencies such as MCC, which require a statement of faith from their workers, would not be eligible to serve as alternative service employers for conscientious objectors in the event of a draft.

Turnage cited the First and Fifth Amendments, saying that to assign to a given employer only "those alternative service workers (ASWs) willing to commit themselves to a particular religious tenet . . . would be a discrimination based on religious beliefs."

Section staff reported that during the 20-year I-W period this problem never arose. Attorneys tell MCC that it is not clear why proposed MCC alternative service work could not be conducted under the same provisions as present MCC employment.

The section directed the staff to continue dialogue with Selective Service, as well as seek additional legal opinion. If Selective Service holds to Turnage's decision, MCC's options include accepting ASWs on a different criteria than regular workers, challenging the Selective Service position in court or deciding not to employ ASWs.

The section invited a group from the Mennonite Nonregistrants Coordinating Committee, and Ted Koontz, assistant professor of ethics at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries in Elkhart, Ind., to address them.

Similar themes pervaded the annual meeting of MCC Peace Section the following weekend, Nov. 11-12. Frank Epp, chairperson, presented a paper outlining 11 themes in the 45-year history of Peace Section, 1939-1984. Epp linked the historical mandate to the challenge of our times. The work of the section, already in the earliest documents, includes "all matters relating to the historic Mennonite non-resistant principles and their applications." Epp observed that "more often than not Peace Section was pushed into forward movement by crisis situations rather than pulled forward by a vision."

Kodwo Ankrah, longtime associate in Mennonite work in Eastern Africa, spoke to the section on "The Search for Peace in Africa." He observed, "Most theology that Europeans have made for the world is being challenged, but one of the permanent elements of the gospel is the peace message."

He discussed major problems facing the African church: The national economies are controlled by foreigners outside Africa who own stock in the multinational corporations, border disputes end up in war, the legitimacy of central governments is contested internally, and ethnic groups or tribes have problems accepting each other.

The official church in Uganda is in a quandry because it has no peace theology. "We have accepted the war

Executive committees adopt statement on homosexuality

Inglewood, Calif. (GCMC)—Meeting jointly here on Sept. 17, the executive committees of the Pacific District Conference (General Conference Mennonite Church) and the Southwest Conference (Mennonite Church) adopted a provisional statement on homosexuality for guidance to member congregations on the issue.

"The statement on homosexuality was developed in response to a request from the leaders of several churches in our conference to our executive committee," wrote PDC vice president James Wenger. "Southwest Conference was facing the same issue and decided to join us. Until such time as our conference delegates make a further statement, this is given to provide guidance for the relevant committees of conference and for the consideration of congregations."

The statement begins by affirming "the historic stance of our Mennonite churches that the practice of homosexual relations is contrary to the will of God."

"We realize that our churches have at times failed to minister to persons with homosexual tendencies," the statement says. "We have allowed attitudes that have prevented persons from seeking the help that they wanted within the church. There are unanswered questions about the cause(s) of homosexuality and not everyone agrees about the degree of change in sexual orientation that can take place."

The statement concludes that "we want to support, in a loving way, persons with homosexual desires and tendencies; however, we cannot condone their continuing homosexual behavior. We cannot accept leaders in our churches who are practicing homosexuals or those who encourage others to engage in homosexual relations. We encourage our congregations to counsel and work with persons who are hurting and who desire the help of the Christian church. All too often homosexuals are the special and undeserving victims of prejudice and discrimination. We, therefore, call on our congregations to consider our attitudes regarding such discrimination in our society, realizing that homosexuals, as all other groups, whether Christian or non-Christian, should be treated as human beings."

Tim Epp, pastor of Grace Mennonite Church in Dallas, Ore., reports that the provisional statement was adopted unanimously by his congregation's church council on Oct. 11. Epp was one of the PDC conference leaders who pressed the district's executive for the development of the statement.

ational tensions

theology of the European churches," said Ankrah. So the church is facing the challenge of the nation empty-handed.

LeRoy Friesen, peace studies professor at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries in Elkhart, Ind., also spoke about the challenge of Central America. Eighty to 90 percent of the people being killed die by weapons made in the United States, he said. Most of the people being killed are being killed by members of a military trained or advised by U.S. forces. Many of those being killed are believers. "I know that God loves all people, but I find myself pulled apart when I see my brothers and sisters being killed by weapons sent from my country," said Friesen. "The blood of our brothers and sisters in Central America is crying to us from the ground."

The Peace Section took five major actions in response to the above discussions:

1. They sent a letter to President Reagan asking that the U.S. government reorient its world policy to give greater attention to the "human interest." The letter, in accordance with earlier MCC and Peace Section actions, calls on President Reagan to step back from the insurgency in Nicaragua and asks for a halt to the deployment of cruise and Pershing missiles in Europe. The section commended the letter to Mennonite churches in the United States and Canada for study, prayer and action.
2. Peace Section encouraged staff to participate with church groups in Europe in giving witness to NATO and the Warsaw Pact.
3. The section encouraged local congregations to address U.S. public policy in Central America.
4. The section established longer-term goals for Middle East peace work.
5. The section, returning to a long-term agenda, developed plans to initiate a three- to five-year effort, in consultation with the wider church, to develop a clearer biblical vision and sense of mission to the social, economic and political order. The section observed that Mennonites have been dedicated to feeding the hungry and providing a home for the homeless, but that they do not have a clear vision of how God wants to order social and economic structures. For example, member Ed Stoltzfus explained that since Mennonites believe that war is inevitable, they have failed to envision another kind of world.

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Dr. Eugene A. Nida, United Bible Societies.

March 12-16, 1984
Evangelism and the Poor.*
Vinay Samuel, Evangelical Fellowship of India.

March 20-23, 1984
Lessons from Northeast Asia for Global Witness.
Dr. James M. Phillips, former missionary to Korea and Japan.

March 27-30, 1984
How My Mind Has Changed about Mission.
Bishop Stephen Neill, Oxford, England.

April 2-6, 1984
The Church's Role in Healing: Challenges and Opportunities in Community-Based Primary Health Care.*
Drs. James and Jean Morehead. Incorporating the findings of the Ninth International Convention on Missionary Medicine (Wheaton, Illinois, 1981). Co-sponsored by American Leprosy Missions and BMMF/International (U.S.A.).

April 10-13, 1984
Contextualization Then and Now: Perspectives from the Early Church and Contemporary Africa.
Dr. Donald R. Jacobs, Mennonite Leadership Foundation, former Mennonite Bishop in East Africa.
At Maryknoll, New York.

April 23-27, 1984
The Gospel and Urbanization: Contemporary Issues in Urban Evangelism—A Global Perspective (1).*
Dr. Raymond Bakke, consultant to Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization; Raymond Fung, specialist in labor evangelism in Hong Kong, Now editor of the Monthly Letter on Evangelism.

April 30-May 4, 1984
The Gospel and Urbanization: Your Ministry as Pastor, Evangelist, and Catalyst for Change (2).*
Dr. Roger Greenway, Westminster Theological Seminary, Professor Samuel Escobar, International Fellowship of Evangelical Students; Dr. Michael Haynes, Gordon Conwell Seminary. The above two weeks on the Gospel and Urbanization are co-sponsored by Inter-Varsity Evangelism, Latin America Mission, Theological Students Fellowship, and World Vision.

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"Human Sexuality in the Christian Life," a seminar conducted by David Schroeder, was held Oct. 24 at the Eben Ezer Mennonite Church in Clearbrook, B.C. "The primary sex organ," Schroeder told several participants, "is the brain, but to shift to this kind of thinking would be revolutionary. Many would rather see it as an animal drive; then they wouldn't have to be responsible for their actions." He went on to discuss male and female roles, singleness, homosexuality and marriage failure.

World Report is billed as the first nationally televised news program covering events and developments related to religion. The new cable news program, available to 7 million households through the Satellite Program Network, is produced by National Catholic News Service, a division of the U.S. Catholic Conference. The producers contend that television is missing significant stories about religion and how it influences world affairs, and add that their aim is to bring these stories to light without the "preaching" and "advocacy" associated with religious programming.

World Report co-anchor and producer Emil Gallina and co-anchor and Washington correspondent Carol Pearson

Unemployed, disadvantaged among the hungry in America

Akron, Pa. (MCC U.S.)—Most Mennonites and Brethren in Christ live in communities that have been moderately affected by the recession of the past several years. Some have even benefited from reduced inflation, the income tax reductions, and high interest on investments and savings.

Yet hungry people live in America. The unemployed and disadvantaged are still in great need.

A recent nationwide survey of 16 food banks and private non-profit agencies that operate 181 emergency food programs indicates that domestic hunger is increasing. (This thorough, carefully controlled survey, titled Souplines and Food Baskets, was conducted from February 1982 to February 1983. Its results were published by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, 236 Massachusetts Ave. N.E., Suite 305, Washington, DC 20002. Copies are free. Postage for each copy mailed is $1.60.)

A needy woman has her plate filled during a food forum at New York's Cathedral of St. John the Divine.

The well-documented study reveals the following:

- More than half of the 181 emergency food programs reported that they provided 50 percent or more free meals or food baskets during the year than they had before.
- Nearly one-third of the programs doubled in size during the year.
- At half of the food banks the number of agencies providing emergency food aid grew 33 percent or more.
- Nearly all of the agencies (92.5 percent) reported a significant number of unemployed workers among those seeking aid. Seventy-five percent of the agencies said there were more families with children seeking help.
- Nearly one-fourth of the agencies had to turn people away. Four out of the 10 agencies reported longer lines and longer waits for food.
- Over half of the agencies reported cost increases over the year of 50 percent or more. More than one-fourth saw their costs double.
- Many agencies stated that the increase in food assistance programs had an adverse impact on other services they provided.
- Many agencies said that the people coming for meals or food baskets also needed other services.

There is little evidence that unemployment will decrease much in 1983 to 1984. Food assistance from the government has been increased very little for the coming year. President Reagan's newly appointed commission to study domestic hunger will take more time to "study the problem."

Mennonites and Brethren in Christ will continue to have opportunities to respond compassionately to hungry people. In January 1983, Mennonite Central Committee U.S. adopted a "Resolution on Domestic Hunger." It begins, "MCC U.S. as an agency of the Mennonite and Brethren in Christ churches is mindful of the biblical imperative to remember the poor (Galatians 2:10), feed the hungry, house the homeless and clothe the naked (Isaiah 58:7)."

The resolution "calls on individuals and congregations in a spirit of searching and prayer to:

- "Seek additional ways to work with needy in our communities and/or nearby areas of acute poverty.
- "Create new structures for aiding the poor. . . .
- "Provide employment opportunities where possible for those groups experiencing the highest rates of unemployment. . . .
- "Work at discovering long-term causes of poverty and injustice, seeking to find specific ways to overcome them."

Now is the time to continue helping the poor. *Art Meyer*

A worship and thanksgiving service celebrating the 35th anniversary of Mennonite Christian Hospital in Hualien, Taiwan, was held Sept. 18. The hospital had its beginning with Mennonite Central Committee mobile clinics, which first went into mountain villages. The first group of five workers went out on the first mobile clinic on Sept. 18, 1948, to Ho-Jung. The mobile clinics continued, and a small-scale hospital opened in 1950. A new hospital was built from 1953-55. The 163-bed hospital now employs 26 doctors and residents, 159 nurses, 36 paramedical technicians and 115 others.

Roland Brown, medical director of Mennonite Christian Hospital, addresses 35th anniversary.

The United Methodist Reporter assumed responsibility for the nation's only daily interfaith news wire service on Nov. 16. The Dallas-based newspaper took over ownership and operation of Religious News Service after responding affirmatively to an initiative from the National Conference of Christians and Jews, which had operated the news service for nearly 50 years.

Denominational leaders discuss cooperation

Denver (Meetinghouse)—The heads of the four largest households in the Mennonite community of faith agree that their families are closely related with a lot in common, that they really should do more of their chores together and that maybe a block party would be nice in the future, but for now they'd prefer to keep living in separate houses, thank you.

Similarities in perspective and challenges, more cooperation in programming and celebration, but apprehension about trends toward merger were all key items discussed at the Council of Moderators and Secretaries annual meeting Nov. 4 in Denver. The council is made up of leaders from the Mennonite Church, General Conference Mennonite Church, Mennonite Brethren and Brethren in Christ.

The leaders spoke almost as one when reporting the issues facing their respective groups. Confrontations on various levels over theological differences within each group was such a common theme in their reports that one participant noted wryly that the differences *within* the four groups seemed almost more pronounced than those *between* them.

Ross Bender, representing the Mennonite Church, wondered whether someday the existing theological pluralism might not result in "a new convergence of alliances that won't look like the old denominations." Still, he added, the presence of differing views should serve to enrich each denomination, not threaten them. "We have a lot to contribute to each other."

Two groups, the Brethren in Christ and the Mennonite Church, have sponsored or will be sponsoring major theological consultations to help stimulate mutual sharing of concerns. Topics to be touched on include the balance between evangelism and social actions, a changing emphasis to "active" peacemaking in society, specific conversion experiences versus a gradually evolving commitment, higher criticism, and the effect of pluralism.

A second common theme was the sensitive issue of Canadian-U.S. relationships within the binational denominations. Nick Rempel, representing Mennonite Brethren, described the current "identity crisis" of U.S. Mennonite Brethren. Their role in relation to their Canadian counterparts has changed since the time when it was larger and more dominant.

Jacob Fransen, a Canadian leader among the General Conference Mennonites, said his denomination would do well to learn from the current situation of the Mennonite Brethren so as "not to be emphasizing nationalism to the point where brotherhood falls by the wayside."

The moderators and secretaries considered a revised purpose and organizational statement that would more clearly outline their task as a body.

Organizationally, they will increase the size of the council from two representatives from each participating group to three representatives, with a concern that both Canada and the United States have representation.

With inter-Mennonite cooperation as its umbrella concern, the council discussed several ways in which their respective groups could come together and even composed a timetable. Heading the list was a major evangelism event already in the works for 1985, a second consultation on inter-Mennonite relationships tentatively proposed for 1987 and possibly a joint celebration gathering in 1989.

Jake Tilitzky, recently elected president of the General Conference Mennonites, was selected as CMS chairman for the coming year. *Don Ratzlaff*

Deadline nears for Perspective '84 registration

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—Tie your shoes! Bike, hike, hitch, drive, train or fly to Minneapolis for Perspective '84, a conference designed to examine the theological and practical dimensions of building a new creation in our time.

"The vision of Perspective '84 is one which includes the desire of God that individuals, the environment and the powers be reconciled," says Al Beitler, a member of the Perspective '84 planning committee and emcee.

Perspective '84, the General Conference Mennonite sponsored gathering of young adults ages 18 to 35, will take place Feb. 16-19, 1984.

A total of 300 to 500 young adults from throughout North America is expected to converge on the Leamington Hotel in Minneapolis for the four-day conference.

Its theme, "Building a New Creation: Partners in Hope," is based on 2 Corinthians 5:17-20. Virginia Mollenkott, author, English scholar and theologian from William Paterson College in Wayne, N.J., will share three presentations. They will paint the reality of our global problems, encourage us to invest ourselves in God's mission and lovingly invite our association with a segment of Christ's body on earth.

More than a dozen carefully chosen workshops will provide the setting to struggle with practical faith and life concepts.

All post-high young adults are urged to register before Dec. 15 and save $10 by paying $35 (U.S.) and $45 (Canadian). Brochures with attached registration forms are available at various campus locations. Lodging is $10 per person each night.

For further information contact Meribeth Sprunger, Perspective '84, General Conference Mennonite Church, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, telephone (316) 283-5100.

A dedication service on Oct. 10 marked the official opening of Union Biblical Seminary in Pune, India. Saphir P. Athyal, principal, fittingly characterized the relocation process of the past eight years as a series of God's miracles. Classes began immediately following the service. Construction work continues at a fast pace, reports COM missionary Helen Kornelsen, but the work will go on for a long time. "We still have to complete 50 percent of the total building plans," says Athyal.

Construction of seminary at Pune

Twenty years after John and Rosemary Zook completed a Mennonite Central Committee assignment as principal and nurse at Mennonite Vocational School in Kyung San, Korea, they returned for three weeks in June. They found out that their students, who paid for the trip, had gone on to become businessmen, college professors, teachers, government officials and ordained pastors. The school, which MCC ran from 1953, in the wake of the Korean War, to 1971, instructed orphan students in agriculture, carpentry, metal work, secretarial skills and electrical work.

Symposium explores an 'uneasy' relationship

Winnipeg (Meetinghouse)—No Mennonite groups have such mixed feelings about one another as the Mennonite Brethren and the General Conference Mennonites. Especially in Canada, the two groups share many things in common—they came out of similar Russian Mennonite backgrounds, they share a common immigrant history, they settled in the same communities, many families are represented in both groups, they share basic Christian convictions, and they sponsor many common projects.

Yet, as George K. Epp said at a supper which concluded a two-day symposium on MB-GC relations in Canada, Nov. 4-5, though the two groups may be together Sunday afternoons, they are "separate Sunday mornings." The symposium, organized by the Center of Mennonite Brethren Studies in Winnipeg and the Canadian MB Historical Society, brought together over 100 participants from the two groups, who talked candidly to one another about their past, present and possible future relationships. Epp, pastor of Douglas Mennonite Church, Winnipeg, and former president of Canadian Mennonite Bible College, was one of a half dozen who presented papers or gave addresses.

The ambivalence in the relationships between the two has a history. Mennonite Brethren once left the "church" Mennonites in Russia (the forerunners of today's General Conference Mennonites in Canada). For many decades after their beginning in 1860, the most fruitful field for Mennonite Brethren evangelism was among the Mennonites in the old church. Much of the call to clear-cut conversion and disciplined living of the Mennonite Brethren was seen as an indictment of the old church.

"The establishment of the Mennonite Brethren church was a blessing for the entire Mennonite brotherhood," said Epp, echoing sentiments expressed earlier by another General Conference participant, Mennonite historian and church leader Gerhard Lohrenz. "But even the most admirable renewal movement loses its justification if the original reason for renewal has been removed," he argued.

That suggested the unspoken agenda for the symposium. Are the reasons for the renewal movement which brought the Mennonite Brethren church into being still there? If they are not, should the two church groups move closer together? If the symposium expressed any consensus, it was that neither of the two groups were what they had been in 1860—they were much more like each other—but reunion was unlikely for many years to come even if it was desirable.

Calgary Mennonite Brethren historian John B. Toews explained some of the reasons for the "unseen wall" described by Gerhard Lohrenz which separates Mennonite Brethren from General Conference Mennonites.

There have been other quarrels among Mennonites which were forgotten, said Toews, but this one was not. It touched the soul of Mennonites more deeply, led to "mutual sin catalogues" and resulted in "official views" which couldn't easily be swept away. The excesses of "hot spirituality," as one participant put it, and the persecution from offended church elders form part of that history. Rejection of stagnant orthodoxy, a new form of baptism and closed communion were part of the history for the Mennonite Brethren, while for the General Conference it was being reminded by "many of the MBs that they considered the GCs spiritually inferior," it was being told that their baptism was not in fact a true baptism, even if it was on faith, it was seeing people leave in protest to join the new group. Despite the tension, Mennonite Brethren and General Conference Mennonites found an uneasy balance through the years.

In Russia before the revolution, said John B. Toews, Mennonites literally did virtually everything together except the conduct of their worship services. Schools, hospitals, agricultural enterprises, forestry units and representations to government were all done together, eventually even church conferences to decide on important issues of the day. "Each knew," said Toews, "on what levels cooperation was possible and where it was not."

In Canada, the conferences have continued to have many things in common. In the early years, many churches even began by having joint worship services. But as they grew stronger (or larger), they moved apart, even in many institutional activities, though much was still done together.

Several of the papers presented to the symposium explored particular areas of Mennonite church life, such as singing and literary expression.

The entire symposium begged a question which was dealt with in a concluding paper: Do MB and GC Mennonites agree or disagree on the basics of their beliefs? Walter Unger, dean at Columbia Bible Institute, Clearbrook, B.C., was asked to answer the question. His answer: essentially they do agree. Confessionally, the two groups are very close, he said. The focus can be summed up in a three-fold way with "Christ as the foundation, the church as the center and the consummation as the hope"—one Lord, one church, one hope.

Nevertheless, General Conference Mennonites are more open, allowing a wider range on the "theological spectrum" than do Mennonite Brethren, he

"Working in community development projects has helped our churches communicate that we believe Jesus is interested in the material well-being of people." "People see the social development and know that our testimony isn't just a future hope." These statements by Nicaraguan Mennonites and Brethren in Christ illustrate their Christian commitment to community development. For the past four years, since the Sandinista revolution overthrew the 50-year-old Somoza dynasty, the Mennonite and Brethren in Christ churches in Nicaragua have worked hard through community-based projects to reconstruct and develop their country.

Lolo, Colama health promoter with the Mennonite and Brethren in Christ service committee, distributes powdered milk.

The Geneva-based Lutheran World Federation has received permission to send 3,000 Bibles, 2,000 catechisms, 5,000 hymnals and 500 books of liturgical and church calendar information to ethnic Germans in the Soviet Union who worship in approximately 150 congregations registered with the government.

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argued, though "in the mainstream"—on issues like the authority of the Scriptures, necessity of conversion, discipleship, the believers' church and the mission of the church—they hold cardinal tenets in common.

Baptism, however, continues to be "the water that divides." Unger used the occasion to present the arguments both that the Mennonite Brethren have made for immersion and that the General Conference has made for sprinkling or affusion. The two groups have been moving together in recent decades, he said. Mennonite Brethren have accepted those baptized on their faith by sprinkling and are now debating ordination for those thus baptized. And General Conference Mennonites are beginning to practice both immersion and sprinkling and will accept as members persons baptized by either mode. Both are concerned that it be a "believer's baptism."

Other areas in which tensions exist are the approach to conversion (MBs stressing the initial experience more), church polity (GCs allowing greater congregational autonomy), church discipline (little difference, Unger maintained).

Baptism continues to be "the water that divides."

The discussion that followed Unger's paper showed that belief and practice issues still generate the most concern in relations between the two groups. Several speakers mentioned the long period of informal and formal discussions which had to precede the actions which brought into being Columbia Bible Institute, the joint MB-GC Bible institute in the Fraser Valley.

One participant of the symposium suggested that while baptism was not a large issue for General Conference Mennonites, the role of women in the church might be far more "divisive" for MB-GC relations.

Several participants said that the attitudes of leaders was the greatest hindrance to working more closely together. "Members are open to direction; they will come along," said Harry Loewen of the University of Winnipeg. We ought to encourage our leaders to be a little more innovative and open, said another.

Senior churchman J. B. Toews of Fresno chided symposium participants for not going deeper in their research. The differences between the two groups were never at the level of the confessions of faith, "the issues were in the perceptions and practices" of the two groups, he said. And issues and tensions between the two groups were also tensions within the GC church.

Those symposium participants who dared to make predictions said they did not consider a formal union of the two conferences likely. Much closer cooperation in church institutions is bound to occur, however, said both Epp and Lohrenz, probably because of economic necessity.

George Epp ended the symposium on a note which cut to the heart: "Do we ever pray for better understanding and cooperation?" What if we prayed for it and that prayer was answered? *Harold Jantz*

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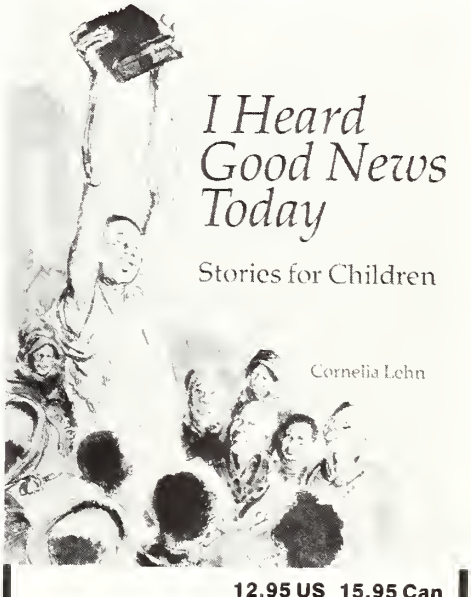

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In November, Lynn Keenan, Mennonite Volunatry Service associate director for the western United States, moved her office from Newton, Kan., to Denver. The move, initiated primarily for personal reasons, will allow Keenan to be more centrally located within the territory she administers for MVS—that stretching from Kansas City to the West Coast. She also hopes to relate closely to a number of Christians intentionally present in one of Denver's low-income neighborhoods and embark on an economic sharing venture there.

"Once in a century" July flooding which devastated several cities and villages in southern Brazil prompted Mennonites in the area to give emergency relief through AMAS, the Mennonite Association for Social Assistance. Brazilian Mennonites contributed $15,000, five tons of clothing and 25 tons of food for the homeless while European Mennonites sent medical supplies. Mennonite Central Committee provided $10,000 for emergency relief efforts. Herman Neufeld, AMAS administrative director, is coordinating the project. Mennonite Brethren pastors are serving as local coordinators for the flood response.

Mennonite workers in Brazil take a break.

CALENDAR

Jan. 13-15, 1984—Mennonite Marriage Encounter, Champaign, Ill.

Jan. 20-22, 1984—MME, Concordia, Kan.

Feb. 17-19, 1984—MME, Lima, Ohio

Feb. 24-26, 1984—MME, Tulsa, Okla.

DEATHS

Elaine Dirks, missionary to Taiwan under the Commission on Overseas Mission, died Nov. 15 at the age of 47. With her husband, Otto, she served in Taiwan from 1968-1980 as director of the New Dawn Development Center for mentally handicapped children. She is survived by Otto and three children, Randall, Steven and Paula.

John J. Wichert, minister of the Vineland (Ont.) United Mennonite Church for over 40 years, died Nov. 12 at the age of 86. Born Oct. 1, 1897, in the Ukraine, he is survived by his wife, Lydia Koop.

MINISTERS

David Block became pastor at Congerville (Ill.) Church Sept. 1, having served previously in Mennonite Brethren congregations.

Ellis Graber became pastor at First Congregational Church, Princeton, Minn., Nov. 6. He had served First Church, Bluffton, Ohio, from 1976-1983.

Barry Schmell became youth pastor at West Swamp Church, Quakertown, Pa., Nov. 27. He has attended Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Ind., and has served at Wayland (Iowa) Church and Washington (Iowa) Church.

WORKERS

G. Boese

P. Boese

Glen and *Phyllis Boese*, Friedensburg Church, Avon, S.D., have been assigned to a three-year term under the Commission on Overseas Mission and Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission as missionaries to Zaire. They will be seconded to Habitat for Humanity to give leadership to a housing project in the Kikwit area. Glen is a graduate of Sioux Falls (S.D.) College, Bethany Biblical Seminary, Chicago, and the University of South Dakota, Vermillion. Phyllis is a graduate of South Dakota State University, Brookings, and the University of South Dakota. They leave for French language study in France on Jan. 3, 1984.

Alice Huxman, First Church, Newton, Kan., joined the General Conference's central office staff Nov. 7 as part-time secretary for Mennonite Voluntary Service.

Sawatzky

Carole Sawatzky, Fort Garry Fellowship, Winnipeg, has begun a 10-month voluntary service assignment with Mennonite Central Committee in Winnipeg with the Development Education Drama team. Her parents are Peter and Anne Sawatzky of Winnipeg.

James Schrag, pastor of Tabor Church, Newton, Kan., was elected chairman of the Bethel College (North Newton, Kan.) board of directors at its semiannual meeting Sept. 30-Oct. 2.

Victor Stoltzfus, an educational administrator, sociology professor and former pastor, will become the next president of Goshen (Ind.) College on July 1, 1984. He will succeed *J. Lawrence Burkholder*, who will have served 13 years as president.

John and *Norma Thiessen*, Altona (Man.) Church, have begun three-year terms with Mennonite Central Committee in West Berlin, where they will study and do church work in East Germany and be hosts at the Mennoheim Guest House. John last worked for the Conference of Mennonites in Manitoba and taught at Elim Bible Institute in Altona. Norma was an elementary school teacher in Gretna, Man. Both have bachelor of theology degrees from CMBC and bachelor's degrees from the University of Manitoba. He also attended AMBS. His parents are John and Natalie Thiessen of Kelowna, B.C., and hers are Henry and Susan Gerbrandt of Wolfsburg, West Germany.

Linden and *Deloris Willms*, Springridge Church, Pincher Creek, Alta., have begun a three-year term in Moundou, Chad, with Mennonite Central Committee. He will work in agri-

Psychiatrist Pauline Rabin and her endocrinologist husband David Rabin first started mulling over the David-and-Goliath story when they visited Israel 12 years ago. As they viewed the site of Goliath's slaying, they wondered whether there was a medical explanation for David's triumph. Their theory—that Goliath was a sickly giant with glandular problems and could die if hit on a cyst on his forehead—was published Oct. 20 in the *New England Journal of Medicine*. They plan to tackle another biblical puzzle: Is there a medical explanation for Samson's transformation from he-man to wimp?

RECORD

Thiessens

Willms

cultural development. They previously served with MCC in Zaire from 1974-78. Linden has a master's degree in animal science from the University of Alberta, Edmonton, and a bachelor's degree from the University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, from which Deloris has a teaching certificate. His parents are Henry and Margaret Willms of Pincher Creek, and hers are Werner and Elsie Zacharias of Fiske, Sask.

Lavon Welty, associate secretary for congregational youth ministries under the Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries of the Mennonite Church, has succeeded *Herta Funk* as staff person for the Mennonite Church/General Conference task force on human sexuality in the Christian life. Welty was given the portfolio at the committee's meeting in Chicago on Oct. 21-22.

COMMISSION ON EDUCATION

. . . as I have loved you

Love requires sharing
Sharing requires struggle
Struggle requires faith
Faith requires love.
—Anonymous

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"We reached a higher degree of love and understanding and spiritual experience than ever before."

"We are discovering a new tool of communication in our marriage that really works. . . ."

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Myrna and Randy both joined the Commission on Education staff in July 1983.

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COE Calendar

February
16-19 PERSPECTIVE '84 (Minneapolis)
20-21 Young Adult Ministries Leadership Event
April
1-6 Project: Teach (Owen Sound, Ont.)

Marriage Encounter Schedule
1/13-15 Champaign, Ill.; 1/20-22 Concordia, Kan.; 2/17-19 Lima, Ohio; 2/24-28 Tulsa, Okla.; 3/2-4 Niagara Falls, Ont.

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LETTERS

Disagree on gender concerns

I take issue with several aspects of Dick Rempel's letter (Oct. 11 issue).

Unfortunately, as a leader, he is visibly "sitting on the fence." I am referring to his positive response to inclusive "people language" and his simultaneous negative response in "deity language." The connection between the two is obviously missed, the fact that by skewing our personal images of deity toward the male gender we are perpetuating the view that male humanity is closer to God than female humanity.

As a seminary graduate, Dick knows that in the original languages spirit-gender is female or neuter, and God is also imbued with female characteristics and metaphors. Is it a too-narrow biblicism that keeps us from recognizing these things?

I take exception to reference to me personally and to my translation of *Lieber Vater* (in *Assembly Songs*) as well. I confess confusion as to why the change to "Loving Parent" should cause Dick and his "senior GC official" (the one from B.C.?) to be "nonplussed" and why I should have had "considerable second thoughts" about the change. Is it seen as a betrayal of a particular Mennonite piety which values the song? Is Dick expressing disappointment at my personal growth since we worked in neighboring churches a few years ago? Why must "time-honored" be used to describe the text, suggesting it is inviolable? And why is a "senior GC official" used to lend credibility to the views expressed? Clearly, there is an emotional agenda here. As to the song, I frankly found *Lieber Vater* (Dear Father) a little sexist and subjective; *our* loving attitude to a *male* God is the thrust. "Loving Parent" suggests to me a God who is loving (regardless of our attitude) and who can be imaged as a parent of either sex for those who need to do that. *Harry J. Loewen, 1500 S. 81-A12, Coralville, IA 52241*

Oct. 21

Issue needs dialogue

I am writing to share with you my concern over the issue of homosexuality. I feel there is a definite need for more copy, particularly now, on the issue.

For example, a gay man took a leadership role during the sabbatical last summer of our regular pastor and did an excellent job in a team with a seminary-trained woman. In response to this, the Southwest Conference of the Mennonite Church cut off funding to our fellowship, and the Pacific District Conference, together with SWC, passed a resolution—with no attempt at dialogue with lay people in the wider church or even clearing a response from our pastor on a final draft of the resolution, which condemned homosexuals and told the church that homosexuals should not serve in leadership positions. All this without the knowledge of gay people involved and without a broader discussion in the church. The statement should be printed in periodicals and follow-up articles and discussion should come from this (see p. 586).

I believe the resolution does a disservice to everyone in the church, particularly the way it was developed and sent out, almost in secret. The justification for it was that churches in Oregon were threatening to pull out of the conference. That's interesting, since it was the first I had heard about the issue. *Mark Lawson, Mennonite volunteer, 802 Page St., San Francisco, CA 94117*

Oct. 28

Christians and politics

It seems regrettable that William Keeney's article "Can Christians Avoid Politics?" (Sept. 27 issue) was written. Perhaps we could have a follow-up entitled "Can a Christian Not Be in Politics?" "Politics" is an ugly word; we need a neutral one, one somewhere between that and the falsely grand "statesmanship."

Last year I was elected councilman in our city. I do not think of myself as a politician, although I am sometimes called that. I hope to deserve the name Christian. I quickly found that as I served on the council I needed to make more searching and painful judgments every two weeks than I made in years as assistant Sunday school superintendent. One instance will illustrate. Residents on a two-block street presented us with a petition asking us to prohibit parking on their street, which is surrounded by a university of 10,000 students. The residents tell us they fear for the safety of their children, that they have trouble getting out of their driveways, that they do not want the cars of strangers parked in front of their houses.

They make a good case. Who can be against children? Apply the Golden Rule. But if the council bans parking on Alta Vista, we know we will be approached by residents of a dozen other streets, all armed with petitions. Many students commute from long distances; parking lots are full. Ban parking and cars now parked on Alta Vista will park on other streets where residents are not anxious to have them. There are children there too. Ban parking on Alta Vista and residents of other streets are likely to sue us if we don't agree to their requests. We live in a litigious age in which cities are often sued. Don't I have an obligation to protect the city against possible litigation?

I voted to deny the request. I did what I had to do. It would have been much simpler not to run for the council.

But I feel a kind of obligation to my society and a certain kind of pleasure mixed with pain in attempting to help run the business of that society. Certain observations strike me about Mennonites in America. (1) We claim to have spiritual sensitivity and insight. If indeed we do, we also have a special responsibility toward society, including the political society. (2) Mennonites who are vocal often tend to be dissidents. They will have nothing to do with the "system." But they enjoy all the benefits of the system. My observation is that where dissidents have had their way recently they create a world of chaos and madness for everyone. I find meaning in the system and enjoy working in it. (3) Someone who doubts the system might well try learning it from the inside. A term on the school board or the PTA or the park board might be a kind of heaven. (4) I believe there is more biblical authority to urge me to serve on the city council than there is which instructs me to stay away from such involvements. *Peter Hilty, Southeast Missouri State University, Cape Girardeau, MO 63701*

Oct. 31

Good to know other Mennonites

I commend Robert Kreider's "What Is a Mennonite Today?" (Oct. 25 issue). Having lived in a General Conference area and attended church for several years, I recently moved and now attend a conservative church.

Many of the members would be downright shocked to realize there are black, brown and yellow Mennonites. They'd shake their heads and state these aren't true Mennonites—much to my chagrin.

Kreider's article hopefully has given us food for thought. *Amos Lapp, Route 1, Ewing, IL 62836*

Oct. 31

Pop goes the church—2

Peter Letkemann

The first article in this series dealt with the question, Can contemporary popular musical styles be used as vehicles in the communication of the gospel? My response was that all musical styles have a place in the witness and worship of the church and in the life of its people. Musical styles are like spoken languages; none is more or less Christian than another.

The decision to use a particular song in a given style will be dependent on the context in which it is used, and on its content. The first question to ask is, To whom are we speaking? The second is, What do we want to say? The third, How are we going to say it?

The avowed purpose of most groups in the Contemporary Christian Music (CCM) idiom is evangelism. Their reasoning goes as follows: The gospel must be presented to people in a language they understand; the various styles of popular music, like jazz, rock, blues, etc., speak a language that is familiar to a large sector of the population; therefore, the use of such familiar styles of popular music, filled with Christian content, will be an aid in reaching unbelievers with the gospel. This evangelism takes place primarily through the use of recordings (heard via personal use or radio) and through concerts.

The majority of songs in the CCM idiom, by artists like Amy Grant, 2nd Chapter of Acts, Imperials, Servant, and Resurrection Band, are written for concert or recording purposes. They speak primarily to people aged 13-25. Their songs cover a wide spectrum of popular styles, from traditional through soft rock to heavy-metal rock. In terms of content, however, most of their songs move within a rather narrow spectrum, focusing on themes of Christian experience, personal salvation and testimony. The songs are subjective in nature, directed to the personal needs and emotional experiences of the individual. They are intended to speak to the young non-Christian, but they also provide "alternative" entertainment for young Christians who enjoy rock music, for example, but are offended by the content of secular rock.

"Cotton Patch Gospel," which opened on Broadway in 1981, featured 16 songs by the late Harry Chapin.

The place of CCM in the life of the individual—on radio and in concert—may be generally accepted, but considerable controversy has surrounded the introduction of contemporary popular styles into the corporate worship of the church. Is there a place, for example, for Christian rock in the worship of the church? In principle, yes. I think it is a sign of maturity in a congregation if members of all ages can accept and respect the musical faith expression of one another. The style does speak to a certain segment of the congregation. Given careful planning, preparation and explanation on the part of the musical and pastoral leadership, it should be possible to make its use meaningful for all. An important determining factor will be its content.

The content of much evangelical CCM, as indicated above, focuses on Christian experience, personal salvation and witness. There are songs like "El Shaddai" (Amy Grant), "Love Is" (Barry McGuire), "Easter Song" (2nd Chapter of Acts) and "Come and Give It All You Got" (Stormie and Michael Omartian), which go beyond these themes, but they are the exception. As with the gospel song, it is appropriate for the church to have this emphasis on personal salvation and witness as part of the message of worship. (In fact, CCM is really an extension of the gospel song tradition.) But corporate worship must also address itself to other themes.

The principle which should govern the content of corporate worship is that of *edification* (upbuilding), as outlined by Paul in 1 Corinthians 12 and 14: "Let all things be done for edification" (1 Corinthians 14:26). The church is a gathering of believers, of people who have already made a faith commitment. The seeds of faith that have been planted need to grow and mature. The use of all music in worship must contribute to this growth process.

Settings of scriptural texts, especially the Psalms, should be at the heart of music in worship that seeks to edify the faithful. The singing of the Psalms has been an essential part of Christian worship since its beginning. The Psalms teach us how to speak to God in prayer and praise. Settings of the Psalms and other scriptural texts are noticeably lacking in evangelical CCM.

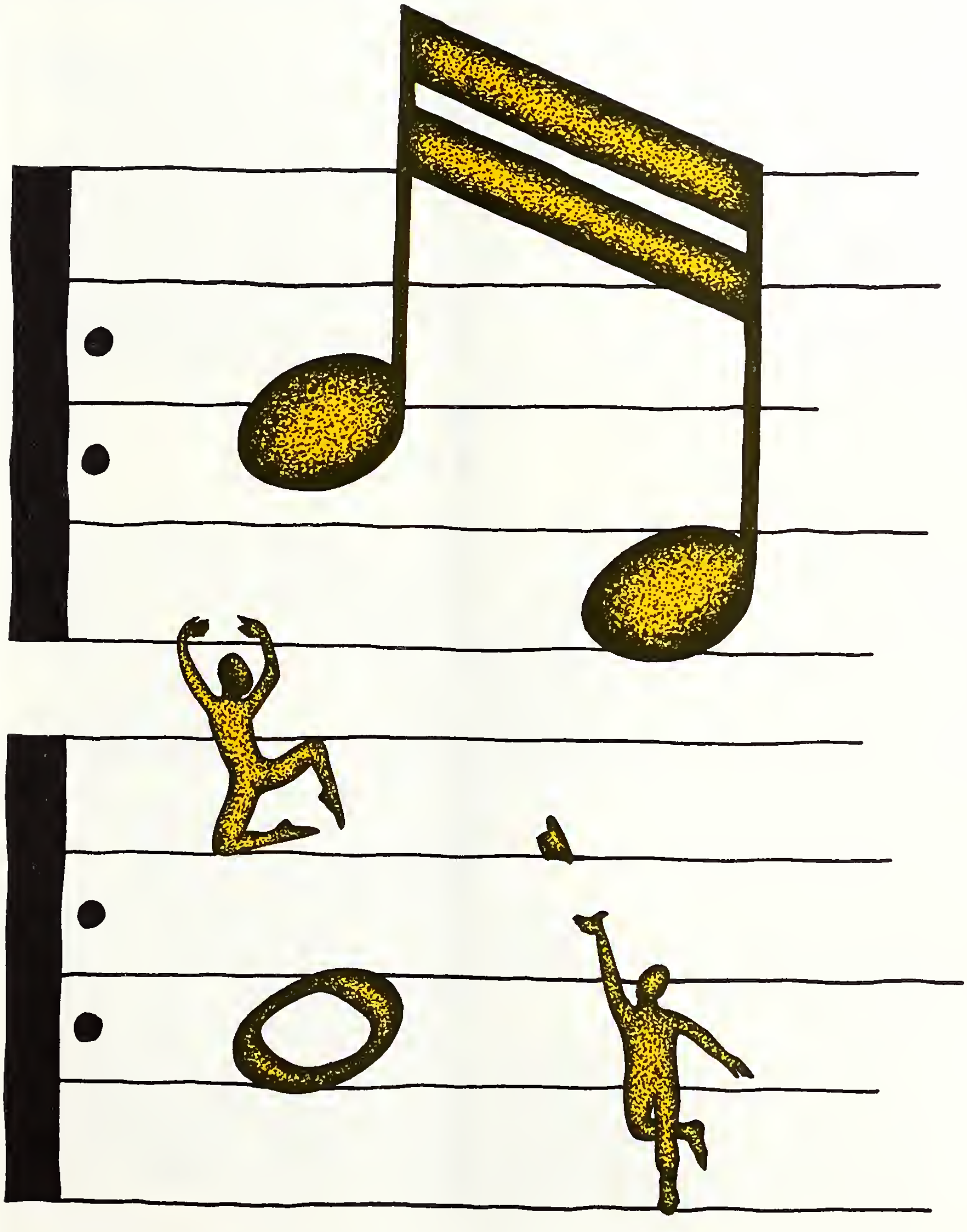
Some of the best worship music in the contemporary popular idiom is being written today by Roman Catholic composers like John Michael Talbot, John Foley and James Marchionda. Their songs are written not only for concert or recording purposes but grow out of the context of the worshipping community. Many songs are settings of the Psalms. There are also songs for important events in the life of the church such as communion or baptism, as well as for the great Christian festivals of Easter, Pentecost and Christmas. Their *style* is contemporary popular, but the *content* is considerably different from evangelical CCM. Their *context* is the corporate worship of the community of faith.

The songs I have been speaking of to this point are intended primarily for performance by small groups. There is a place for performance as part of our corporate worship, but such groups must be careful not to fall into the danger of providing entertainment or fostering an audience mentality. This danger can be avoided if the songs chosen are planned as an integral part of the worship service, relating to the message of Scripture and the sermon rather than being sung for their own sake.

Furthermore, one must say that the use of popular styles can help congregations become less inhibited in their worship. Their use has helped to reintroduce elements of participation like clapping, body movement and dance, which are mentioned frequently in the Bible but which our congregations have lost. As a result we may yet recapture the biblical view of worship as an action involving our total being: body, soul, spirit and voice.

I would challenge church musicians, pastors and all members of the body of Christ to be inclusive rather than exclusive in their thinking, to recognize that there are a "variety of styles but the same Spirit" (paraphrase of 1 Corinthians 12:4). As at no other time in history, the church today needs a musical menu that is both varied and balanced if it is to provide the food that its members need for spiritual growth. As Christians, we must learn to accept and respect the musical faith expressions of other Christians, not only within our own congregations but of our brothers and sisters around the world. Together we will truly be able to sing a new song to the Lord of all the earth. To him be glory in the church. *Second in a two-part series*

. . . we may yet recapture the biblical view of worship as an action which involves our total being: body, soul, mind, spirit and voice.



Peter Letkemann, 14 Dieppe Ave., Kitchener, ON N2H 4G1, is a doctoral candidate in musicology at the University of Toronto.

film

The noble wolf

Never Cry Wolf, *a Walt Disney film directed by Carroll Ballard, produced by Lewis Allen, Jack Couffer and Joseph Strick, screenplay by Curtis Hanson, Sam Hamm and Richard Kletter*

Reviewed by Gordon Houser, editorial assistant for The Mennonite

Like Ballard's first film, *The Black Stallion* (1981), *Never Cry Wolf* combines the poignant interplay of human and animal, the humor and majesty of their meeting, plus breathtaking scenery. I sat enthralled by the earlier film, a portrayal of innocence confronted by the manipulations of men. But the latter film, which follows a similar theme, is even more stunning. Once again Ballard shows us the noble power of a species of animal, but he goes on to teach us, to learn with the main character, the true nature of wolves.

An idealistic, naive young scientist (Charles Martin Smith) agrees to spend six months in the vast northern wilderness observing Canis Lupus Arctica, the largest and rarest of wolves. Scientists have suspected wolves of decimating the number of caribou. But the young scientist's observations reveal a much different creature than the one maligned in legend. We learn that wolves are family oriented, keeping the same mate throughout their lives, living in packs which practice a mutual care that humans rarely achieve.

He also meets several Inuit Eskimos, who depend largely on the caribou for their livelihood. In their legends the wolf was a spirit given to them by the gods of creation. The wolves weed out the sick and weak among the caribou, which allows the healthy deer to prosper for Inuit sustenance.

Both the Inuit and the wolves are said to "have no orphans." If any lose their parents, they are adopted by others in the tribe or pack. What a picture of biblical *shalom*!

Although a beautiful nature film, *Never Cry Wolf* is filled with suspenseful moments that mix the harsh beauty of the land with the whimsical insignificance of the human creature. It also presents us with the callous exploitation of nature by money-hungry people. Ballard juxtaposes the noble wolf and the ignoble human.

Disturbing questions

Under Fire, *an Orion film directed by Roger Spottiswoode, produced by Jonathan Taplin, screenplay by Ron Shelton, story by Clayton Frohman*

Reviewed by Gordon Houser, editorial assistant for The Mennonite

Under Fire poses disturbing questions through the experiences of an American photojournalist working in Nicaragua in 1979 during the fighting between the Somoza government and the Sandinistas. How objective can a journalist be when confronted with human suffering and injustice? How powerful is the press in determining the outcome of a war?

The film addresses the first question in an interesting, suspenseful manner. When Russell Price (Nick Nolte) is asked to discard his journalistic ethics for the sake of saving the lives of Sandinistas, he protests, "I don't take sides, I take pictures." His questioner says that no one can choose not to take sides. But when Price makes his choice, it comes too quickly, too easily. He needs to be seen struggling more with his decision for it to feel authentic.

The power of the press is presented a bit excessively. The war ends one day after a certain photo is shown on TV. Not to deny that this can happen, but it seems too contrived, too overdone. Though most of the film makes its points with subtlety, the ending seems trite. Nolte, a fine actor, comes across like John Wayne at the end.

But *Under Fire* is about more than journalistic ethics. The brazen callousness of the Western press is portrayed in several scenes. One correspondent describes Nicaragua as "a neat little war and a nice hotel." The widely publicized photo of a Sandinista leader is said to be "bigger than Farrah Fawcett."

The acting, staging, makeup are excellent. The language will offend some viewers; others will realize that that's simply how many people talk. *Under Fire* is a powerful, timely film.

books

Handling marriage failure

Divorce, the Bible and the Law *by B. Ward Powers and John Wade (Australian Fellowship of Evangelical Students, 129 York St., Sydney, Australia 2000; 1978, 50 pages)*

Reviewed by Gus Konkel, Route 1, Box 27, Winkler, MB R0G 2X0

Jesus said that whoever puts away his wife causes her to commit adultery, and whoever marries her that has been put away commits adultery. How are these words to be applied to the principle of marriage and to various individual instances of marriage failure?

A great strength of the exegesis of Powers is that he understands the words of Jesus in their historical context of the application of Mosaic Law. This enables us to properly apply these words in our own context. In clear outline he follows the teaching of Jesus on the principles of marriage and the problem of divorce, then the further application of the words of Jesus by the apostle Paul to the problem of remarriage.

A serious problem for the church is legalism and casuistry in handling marriage failure. Both the state and the church are involved. We all tend to get caught up in the search for the guilty and the righteous. Wade puts our practices into historical perspective. He helps us see the shortcomings of present procedures—in state and church—in light of this perspective. This helps us see the directions in which we need to move for better state laws and church involvement.

Every pastor and congregation will sooner or later face the problem of marriage failure. Not everyone will agree with Powers and Wade, but these authors force us to clarify our thinking about the teaching of Jesus and Paul on the matter and lead us to better church practice.

MEDITATION

Jesus, come on in

Lord Jesus,
it occurs to me that I have always
misinterpreted that picture of you
knocking at the door.

I always thought that what was keeping you locked out
was my badness, all the evil thoughts,
the wrong things I've done,

But that's not it at all, is it?

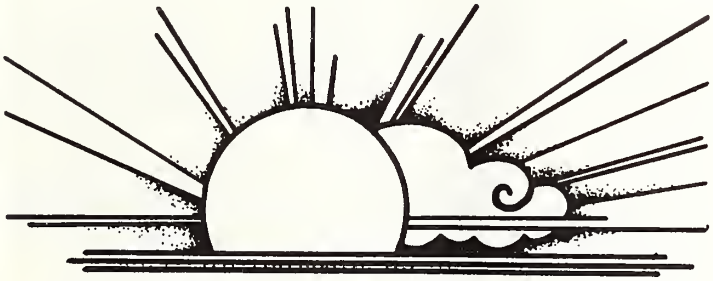
I've been keeping you out, until I can clean up a room for you to stay in,
with absolutely clean sheets,
perfectly made bed, not a speck of dust,
pictures hung just right.

I keep forgetting, Lord Jesus, that you were willing to come to a manger,
with hay all over the place and dusty straw for a mattress,
where there were no windows and no pictures,
just a place, as it was,
but open and ready for you.

Lord Jesus, come into my life,
as imperfect as any stable is for your habitation.

Come, before I make it completely ready for you,
because if I ask you to wait for that,
you will be outside knocking forever. Amen

William F. Finlaw



IS NOT THIS THE FAST I CHOOSE...
TO LOOSE THE BONDS OF WICKEDNESS,
TO UNDO THE KNOTS OF THE YOKE,
TO LET THE OPPRESSED GO FREE,
AND EVERY YOKE TO SNAP?
IS IT NOT TO SHARE YOUR BREAD
WITH THE HUNGRY, AND THE HOMELESS POOR
TO BRING HOME; AND WHEN YOU SEE
THE NAKED, TO COVER HER,
AND TO HIDE NOT YOURSELF
FROM YOUR OWN FLESH?
THEN SHALL YOUR LIGHT BREAK OUT
AS THE DAWN,
AND YOUR HEALING SPRING FORTH
SPEEDILY.... ISAIAH 58: 6-8

CONTENTS

To prepare for the coming of Jesus Christ among all our Advent busy-ness requires deliberate effort on our part. We must try to make some pathways ready for him to take and come among us. This Advent issue presents several stimulating options where we can/must look for a special coming of Jesus. Our prayer and hope is for all of us to seek his Advent.

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EdiTORIAL

Advent began in Moscow last June

In a Moscow hotel last June I had a happy discussion with a Russian schoolteacher. She told me about her students and her work. Then she expected me to tell her about education in Canada. We laughed about the similarities, even though we were from opposite sides of the globe (in more ways than geography).

Suddenly she became quiet and seemed to draw within herself. She looked at me, looked down, then said with some hesitation, "Can I ask a personal question?"

I had no idea what to expect but assured her, "I can't imagine any question you need be afraid to ask."

She said haltingly, "I am an atheist and teach atheism in school. What do you say to that?"

My reply was, "I hope you won't be too upset with me, but I really don't believe you are an atheist. In fact, I believe there are very few atheists in Russia.

"Your people tell us that 40 percent belong to organized churches. My impression is that the rest of you worship Lenin."

Her eyes, instead of becoming slits of mistrust, seemed to open wider by the second. "What can you possibly mean?" she asked.

I replied that your god is really wherever you put your highest trust. Some people worship Satan; others worship cultic figureheads; we Christians profess to worship the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob who makes himself known to us in Jesus Christ.

While the number of visible churches and other Christian signs in the Soviet Union are scarce, you can hardly walk a block without seeing a painting, a sculpture or a saying of Lenin. The Soviet people obviously put great confidence in him.

She objected, "But surely that is not like belief in God."

"Well," I said, "if you go by the dictionary, it defines God also as 'a person or thing of supreme value' (*Webster's Ninth*, p. 525). Whatever and whoever you or I declare allegiance to and make our highest priority is our god. Your god, Lenin, is not like my God in Jesus, but he is god for you."

Her eyes were sparkling now and I could feel the creative quest in her for more discussion. She smiled. "About that I wish we could talk a lot more, but I have an appointment. Could we talk about it again?"

"Anytime you can," I said as she excused herself.

Time did not permit us to meet again. But I have thought much about that conversation.

J. Russell Hale, in *The Unchurched*, a study of people in the United States who don't actively affiliate with any church, says that one of every three people in the United States needs to be evangelized.

Hale's research suggests that the unchurched can be divided into 10 categories. You'd expect the unbeliever to be the largest group. Right? Wrong. He says that the group of true unbelievers is by far the smallest group i need of the Good News.

He found that by far the largest group consisted of th *publicans*. Hale defines these as people observing Christians and saying they'd rather not come to church because too many of us are hypocrites. Their doubts are not as much about God as about us.

I believe Hale's study is accurate. Too many of us inside the church give outsiders the impression that we are already living the perfect, godly life. When they then see us in real life, they know our confession and life are inconsistent.

This has helped me again this year to look forward to Advent. John the Baptist's words, "Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight" (Matthew 3:36), are for us today.

Any one of us still has some path-straightening to do. Perhaps a greater challenge for us than persuading the true unbeliever is to take time in this holy season to let Jesus come and occupy at least one more part of our lives and to confess that there is still hypocrisy in us (Paul unashamedly confesses it in Romans 7:21-24).

Such honest preparation for the Advent of Jesus Christ could prepare paths for many seekers, many strugglers.

Some people find a temporary relief in Lenin; most Christians find temporary relief in Christ. Lenin has nothing more to offer; that is it. Jesus always has more to offer his followers.

Let's work at construction in this Advent, confess our crooked paths and let the King of Glory come to us and newly straighten out at least one more crooked path in our lives. *Bernie Wiebe*

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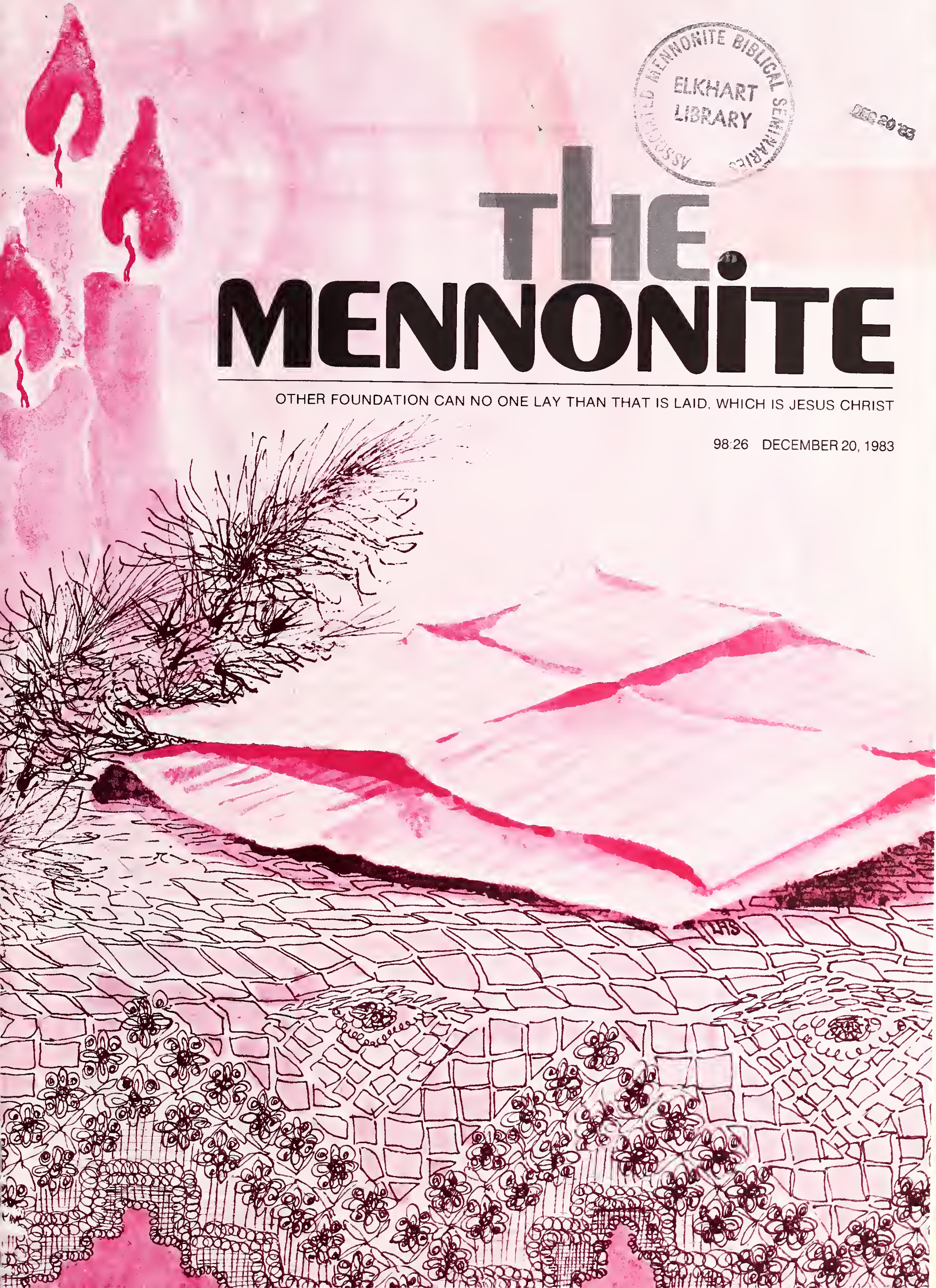


Letters from home are precious

Elfrieda Schroeder

When separated from loved ones by a wide ocean, with no way of communicating except by letter, the letters become very precious. We received two such letters from my parents last Christmas, and they are so good they need to be shared. They show me my rich heritage, and I'm infinitely grateful and blessed.

My mother wrote to her granddaughters in English, even though her heart language is German. Here's what she wrote.

"Christmas again! So many Christmases have passed in our lives. I had to think back to the Christmases when I was a little girl. I remember one year especially, when the Communists had taken our churches away, put ministers into prison and told us not to celebrate Christmas. No presents; we understood that. There was no money and nothing to buy. But no Christmas tree; that I could not take. All I thought about was a nice *Tannenbaum*. If people found out we had a tree, it would mean our father would end up in jail. But I hoped for a tree. I taught my younger brothers verses, we made Christmas cards and tried to be obedient.

"Christmas came. I was excited, and when my father opened the living room door there was the most beautiful tree I had ever seen. I saw nothing else. But we had presents too. I got a doll, not new, but one I hadn't seen before; and she wore a nice new dress. The boys got tin soldiers and horses.

"Years later during Advent of 1943, when we were refugees in Poland, nobody mentioned Advent or Christmas. We didn't even want to think about it; it made us too sad. We had two little children—no home, no food, no money. Our cute baby girl (your mommy) had to be in a different building for cleanliness and health reasons. It was meant well but was so hard for us. Well, on the first Advent Sunday, all the mothers went to feed their babies. When we opened the door to the barracks, I felt like I stepped into heaven. All the tables were covered with white sheets, green pine branches and candles. Sister Maria played Christmas songs on her guitar and sang *Es ist ein Ros'entsprungen* (Lo, how a rose e'er blooming). That was the right Christmas thing to do. I think Jesus made her do that. She put a light into our dark days and that light still shines."

My father also wrote. Here are parts of his letter (translated from German).

"We are traveling ever higher up the mountain. Much has happened in the 70 years of my life. The changes in lifestyle—and the many discussions about what is right or wrong—are so enormous that I have difficulty coming to grips with it. All traditions—everything one has learned and lived—must be freshly evaluated. Over and over one must meet the new, examine and test it, take what is good and leave the bad. Forms and methods, traditions and habits change. But I have found that one thing never changes, and that is our God in Christ Jesus. To him you can go just as you are at the moment. He understands the young; he understands the old; he understands those in between.

"Next Sunday we celebrate Advent. He who is the Advent tells us he is coming again to take home all who want to go home with him. We can rejoice and be glad. He takes the nomad (shepherd) as well as the astronaut—the high or the low—it makes no difference to him. It sounds so simple: 'He who believes in me.' That is how it was in the beginning and that is how it is now. 'He who believes in me will be saved.' No tradition, no lifestyle—whether good or bad—can change this. He who has faith.

"We're waiting for Christmas. We're waiting for you also. You will meet changes too when you come home—changes in lifestyle and work, a different way of thinking and planning. You will have to try to understand these new circumstances. Bring some of your old values into the new, especially love, patience and understanding. How old are they? How strong are they? One has to have a lot of understanding and insight when a family grows from two to 32 (and another on the way). I so appreciated our family reunion this past summer. Not one was missing. I think of eternity and hope I'll be able to say, 'Not one is missing.'

"Lots of love from Opa and Oma." •

My letter to Santa Claus

Keith A. Miller

Dear Santa Claus:

I've never believed in you, not even for a moment.

A professor once called me an oddball for that, saying I wasn't normal if I hadn't at one time or another believed in the fat guy in the red suit. But I didn't, even though I did sit on your lap once in a now defunct department store in my hometown.

Even then I knew you weren't real. My parents never said you were real. My friends never told me you were a living being. And besides, a person doesn't have to be too old to realize that Santa Claus can't be in all the stores in town at the same time—and in all sorts of dimensions.

And now, after all these years of unbelief, I'm awfully glad I didn't believe in you in my younger days. I'll tell you why: Santa, you are a lie. You're not real, like so many of today's parents try to tell their children. You don't bring gifts, and you don't really have lists telling you who's been bad and who's been good. You don't even like cookies and milk.

In itself, that lie seems harmless. But look at the danger, Santa. Look at the monster so many parents have created. They tell their children about you, and then one day—poof—the youngsters find out the truth. What does that do to the reliability—the trustworthiness—of other things parents tell their children? What about this Jesus they talk about at Christmas? Is he then imaginary too?

See, Santa, see what they've made you into.

I know it's not your fault. After all, you're modeled after a real person, Nicholas, the good old saint of the 4th century who took presents to the needy by night. That's good, and the spirit of that giving is good. Moreover, St. Nicholas' giving spirit probably came from Jesus himself, the one whose birth we celebrate at this time of year.

As you know, Santa, that baby is the one who is important at Christmas, and he's the one whom people have pushed out of this holiday season. He's the one they've forgotten, forcing you into the limelight whether you want to be there or not.

And then they've twisted your spirit of giving into one of getting. They teach their children greed. Emphasis is not placed on your goodness or graciousness, but what the kids can get out of the old guy with the bag stuffed full of toys. They've perverted your whole intention of showing the importance of giving.

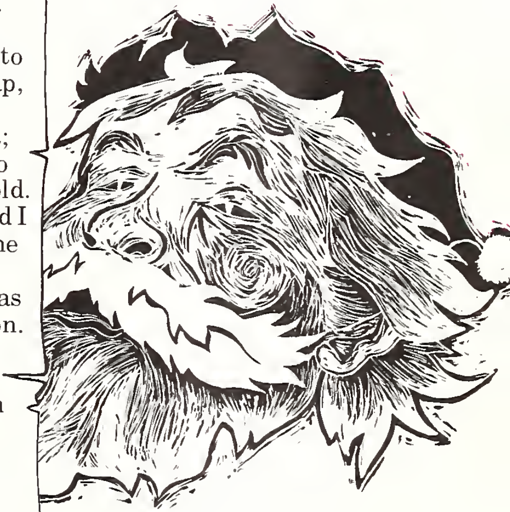
But giving is something Jesus still stands for. He is the true epitome of giving, using his life as a gift to all people. You know, Santa, it didn't even matter whether we'd been bad or we'd been good. Jesus lived and died for all of us.

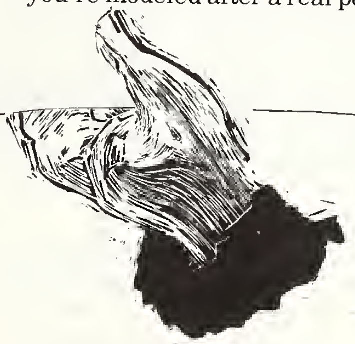
I know you know that. And I know deep down that's what you would like to show those children who sit on your lap, even though you're just a fairy tale.

Like I said, I know it's not your fault; it's what so many parents have done to you. So I'm sorry if I've sounded too bold. I honestly don't dislike you, Santa, and I even admire your model of giving to the needy.

I just don't want children to see you as the central figure of this holiday season. I want them to see who they should really remember on Dec. 25—and throughout the year—and I want them to know why that's so important.

If you were real, Santa, I think even you would say that's the way it should be. •





Another Christmas day

J. O. Schrag

As being born into a dream, crisp winter air breaks
Into a star, expectant, soft and glittering.

In the distance church bells muffle
the laughter of children,
Beckoning in the season of joy.

A child's firm cry lights up the sky,
Shepherd's staffs cast a long shadow
across the years
As a mute world awakens
To another Christmas Day.

Robb Nickel

My pilgrimage to the cradle and...

"And in that region there were shepherds . . . [who] found . . . the babe lying in a manger" (Luke 2:8-16).

An imaginary shepherd. The text refers to shepherds. Here is the imaginary story of one of those shepherds. Luke's account is full of excitement and anticipation. But let's imagine there was a shepherd in that group—maybe like you or me—who found all the events a little hard to believe. Listen to him.

It was a cold winter night. Before leaving home I had wrapped sheepskin around my legs and feet and right now I was glad. The other fellows had already built a fire and I joined them. I've always enjoyed fellowship around the fire. If it wasn't for that, this sheepherding business could get awfully boring. This particular night seemed to be the usual. There was a minor skirmish with a wolf, but after the sheep were again settled the night was going smoothly.

I had just begun to doze off beside the fire when suddenly a brightness dazzled my eyes. I thought to myself, "Have I slept that long? Surely I didn't sleep all night." I raised my head and noted the other men around the fire also seeing this brightness. I wondered whether the moon was just that much brighter. What's going on? I couldn't see the moon. Now everybody around me was looking skyward and as my eyes turned up, I couldn't believe what I saw. Was I dreaming? But no, my eyes were open and the other guys were gazing up with mouths open. I looked again. Was I seeing things? It looked like a person hanging there in the sky. Around that figure there was a bright light. My immediate reaction was fear, and I felt it also in my friends.

But what about the sheep? I looked around, but the sheep seemed to be settled as though nothing was happening. I felt relieved, if that was possible within my fear-frozen body. My heart was pounding. Why was this sky-figure visiting us poor shepherds who had done no one any wrong? What should I do? I looked up again and realized that this figure—or was it an angel from heaven—was preparing to speak. Sure enough, even though my heart was pounding loudly, I did hear, "Be not afraid; for behold, I bring you good news. . ." (Luke 2:10-12).

Sure, don't be afraid. It's not every night we get a visitor from heaven out here in the fields. So why were we told about this baby being born in our little town, Bethlehem? I couldn't figure it out. Why should we poor shepherds be told about a Savior being born? Shouldn't this heavenly messenger be speaking to the chief priests? Were we going to be saved from the Romans? I couldn't understand it. And why was this Savior being born in a stable? Shouldn't a person of such stature be born at the king's court?

All these questions raced through my mind as I watched this bright light. And then to top it off, a crowd joined this sky messenger and they began to praise the

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God of heaven, saying that he had favor on us all. It was totally amazing.

Just as suddenly as this whole affair started, it ended. What now? All us shepherds, after our initial fear let up, were excited and curious about the promises just made to us. The feeling among us was to quit waiting around. Let's go to Bethlehem and find out what's going on. And if there is a child. . . .

"Wait a minute," I said. "What about the sheep? Who's going to take care of them?" I guess this question came because I hesitate to go on wild goose chases. Had I really seen a sky vision? Yes, I guess I had . . . it was indelibly on my mind. But what about this child to become a Savior? Savior from what? Was this small baby born in a stable supposed to save us from the Romans, or from poverty? Finally, though, I ran with the others.

Upon arrival in Bethlehem I began to realize why people could spend the night in a stable. The town was jammed because of the Roman census, and there was no room in any of the inns. We asked directions of a number of people and finally made our way to what we thought was the stable referred to in the vision. We approached with caution and apprehension. Would a young couple who had just experienced childbirth welcome a bunch of grubby visitors from the fields? As it turned out, Joseph and Mary welcomed us for a number of reasons.

It was a joy for them to share the birth with people who were interested, and much more importantly, they realized an importance in this child and wanted to tell us. Being skeptical by nature, I couldn't picture this tiny child becoming a Savior. Again I thought, A savior from what?

As Mary spoke of her vision, the pregnancy and the birth of this child whom they had named Jesus, my heart warmed to her and Joseph's love and concern. Mary spoke of God's promise through the angel and described her baby as the Son of the Most High. He was to receive the throne of David and reign over the house of Jacob forever. I couldn't help feeling that her faith would be rewarded.

My friends and I went away from the stable experience rejoicing, and we spread the word about this event. I couldn't help but think of myself as I noticed the skeptical looks from the people we spoke to.

Many years have passed since that night, and somehow I'm still a skeptic. The baby Jesus has more or less vanished. All I have heard about him is that there's a carpenter named Jesus in Nazareth. He was supposed to be our Savior, but I really don't know what that means. It's been 30 or so years since his birth and as far as I'm concerned it hasn't become easier living under Roman rule. Now lately this Jesus has been roaming the countryside making a nuisance of himself preaching things like: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you. He breaks Sabbath laws and even performs miracles. Who besides magicians have power to do things like that? I really don't know what to think. I guess love if honestly practiced could solve a lot of our problems, but I don't see that making life easier. And really, the way this king is going about saving his people doesn't measure up to our history either. In my mind, our king should resemble King David.

But you must be getting a little tired of hearing me complain. It's just that we as a people have waited so many years for a real messiah that I'm having a difficult time visualizing this wandering carpenter as a messiah. Don't get me wrong. The things Jesus has been preaching and living in the last few months around here do impress me. When I really think about his ideas I can begin to appreciate them. But I was expecting much more.

The shepherd in me (and you?). There's something of the shepherd in each of us. About 32 years ago a boy was born in Winnipeg. His parents loved him and wanted to raise him in a Christian home. This is my true story.

I consider myself fortunate to have grown up next door to my grandparents. My grandfather was a minister in the church we attended. When I think back, I realize that his character and his lifestyle taught me more than many of his sermons. He was a softspoken, patient man.

One of the most obvious lessons I learned from him happened during the summer. My parents and grandparents had long rows of raspberries, and every one in our family was compelled to pick berries all day every second day of the week through the growing season. (To this day I refuse to plant those berries in my garden.)

Well, one day, as was quite usual, a customer came to buy raspberries. I watched as grandfather displayed the merchandise, added the total amount due and told the buyer the cost. An exchange of money and goods was made and the visitor was about to leave when grandfather noticed that he had been shortchanged. He drew this to the customer's attention but to no avail. Discussion followed and the buyer got quite upset. I was beginning to be angry too, but grandfather patiently tried to explain the error. Nothing worked. Finally the person left.

I couldn't believe it. Here was a dishonest person, and grandfather let him get away without paying. Grandfather didn't even show anger. It seems like a small thing now, but it was vivid for me then.

Because grandfather was a minister, he often had guests in his home. One of these, who came quite regularly, was "big" Abe Neufeld, the evangelist. To a 10-year-old boy he *was* big. He always had to duck to go through the doorways of my grandparents' home.

But my most vivid memories of Rev. Neufeld were the crusades in our church. Sometimes in one week of meetings I must have gone through seven or eight conversion experiences. This was a traumatic time. I knew Mom and Dad wouldn't let me stay at home and I also knew I wouldn't enjoy the service. I always got scared at these meetings and

went home confessing sins I'm sure I never committed, just so I wouldn't go to hell if I died during the night. I really don't know what benefit these crusades had for me. To this day I struggle with that method of winning souls for the kingdom. I suppose because of that experience I place a much greater emphasis on my actions than on the testimonies I might be able to give in order to demonstrate my Christianity.

Around the age of 16 I began to attend catechism classes. Each year the pressure was on to join the church. What to do? I didn't think it was right to be baptized and join the church just because my peers did. I was also afraid to get up in front of the church to give a testimony. But after a few years I did join the church. The experience was meaningful for me because of the respect I learned for the public act of baptism and the seriousness of taking communion. Because of lessons learned in those years, communion for me has become a time of cleansing and reuniting with the fellowship of believers.

Mom and Dad were concerned about my spiritual welfare. They were not very verbal Christians, but the consistency of their lives spoke to me.

My father had a deteriorating disc in his back which eventually had to be removed by surgery. During his stay in the hospital I made what I believe was a true commitment to follow Christ. I was moved by it and had to tell someone. I had occasion to visit Dad in the hospital one evening and I shared my joy with him. I rarely saw my father cry, but this time both of us were moved to tears. We shared our joy without many words, but I knew that when I left, Dad would sleep well.

High school was a difficult time for me. Not having a good self-image didn't make being a Christian any easier. Trying to remain popular and non-controversial and a Christian at the same time didn't work. I felt guilty for not attending Student Christian Fellowship meetings and weird when I did attend them. I heard a lot of spiritual talk at these meetings but I didn't see corresponding actions. Why would young people say they were Christians and not live more Christlike? Today I understand why they (we?) were sometimes laughed at and called hypocrites. I really didn't know if I wanted to identify with them.

After high school came more decisions. What about a job? I tried a lot of different things, and finally in 1968 I decided to try Bible school. I believe that was a turning point in my life.

At Bible school, with the help of many people, I was able to begin finding answers to some of the questions in my life. I also met Sally (my wife) there, but that is another story.

During my second year at Elim Bible Institute (Altona, Man.) I was appointed one of the deans in the men's residence. This responsibility restricted my activity. My patience was tested many times and I'm sure I tested my fellow student's as well.

During that year there was a charismatic movement in our residence. I became involved, although I was a little uncomfortable with it. As I look back, I realize partly why. Again, as in high school, I saw a contradiction between confession and behavior. We enjoyed the emotional highs in our meetings, but we were not always willing to back that in our living. This left me with an empty feeling. Bible school, however, did give me new direction and confidence in my spiritual life, and I thank God for it.

Later, working at Radio Southern Manitoba became enjoyable for me. Yet it also presented a dilemma. A lot of emphasis was put on the commercial success of the station. The service emphasis seemed secondary. I didn't know if I wanted to contribute that way. At one point in my career as a broadcaster I dropped out for two years and drove a lumber truck. During those two years on the truck I had a lot of time to reassess my decision, and went back to radio. I haven't been sorry because I decided to work at my problems within the system.

Then, a few years later, another crossroads came in my life. I was challenged to take on an MCC assignment. That wasn't an easy decision. I enjoyed radio and felt hesitant to leave again. Sally and I prayed about it and asked the advice of our church fellowship and prayer group. Our group helped us to probe and question our motives. Through the process they reminded us of the part God was playing in our lives and they kept praying for us. They rejoiced with us after we had worked through the issue and decided to leave Altona for our new assignment.

I can't say I've always made the right decisions in life, but I can say with assurance that God has never let me down. I know I have let him down, but I've found him waiting patiently for the time when I was ready to give him my allegiance again. I believe that my life with God is an everyday affair of renewal and challenges. I know that with the help of my loved ones and all of us in our church fellowship I can go on being a follower of the Lord Jesus.

Summary. I'd like to ask the question of all of us: Where are we on the road to Bethlehem? Like the shepherds we all encounter people who give us the message, perhaps people we look up to. In our daily living we all receive calls to serve, and in answering these calls we take little steps of faith as the shepherds did when they went to the cradle. I challenge us all to walk with each other through both joys and sorrows. Paul the apostle says it well in his letter to the Romans (read 1:8-12).

So let us with the shepherds rejoice at the birth of our promised Savior and through our lives be a blessing to others at seasons of promise in their lives. •

Our yea and our nay

Calvin Redekop

About three years ago, a person I scarcely knew stopped by and told me he had heard I was in the solar business. I admitted that I was. "I'd like to discuss a possible installation," he said. A few days later he came to look at our prototype and we discussed various facets of solar heating.

After a while he said, "Okay, if you can install a system for less than x number of dollars (in five digits) it's a deal." There was no other formality. My son, vice president of the solar company, proceeded to manufacture this system and install it. There were the usual difficulties to operationalize the system, but the problems were all eventually solved and that family has been happy with it ever since.

The other day I received a call (my son was out of the country) saying the system was not working. So I sent in a repairman who traced the difficulty to a malfunctioning control module. The customer called later and said, "Well, the system is over three years old now and I am sure the warranty is run out, so send me the bill." The irony was we had never discussed a warranty when he bought the system. I remember his saying when he decided to buy this system, "I am buying from you because I assume I can trust you." How did he know? Anyone who knows solar realizes that it is especially vulnerable to charlatans and to those who want to make fast money.

Slowly the significance of that business deal has been dawning on me. Here was a person who hardly knew us or the solar company. He bought a system without any real track record about our company's past performance or our product. He did not ask for any guarantee. The whole agreement was a simple verbal transaction. He trusted us to keep our side of the bargain. We trusted him to keep his side.

What lessons can we draw from this? (1) That our solar company is run by crazy people (you may be right)? (2) That capitalism still has some shining examples of integrity (I don't think this proves anything in this regard)? (3) That Christians can do business better than non-Christians (the irony is that this customer is not an active church member)?

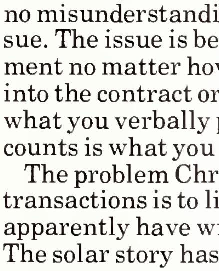
What is the place of 'yea' and 'nay' in today's complicated business world?

The underlying issue was brought home to me in a recent lecture I heard at a local Mennonite church. The topic was "Christians and Christian Ethics in Business." The lecturer said one of the cardinal ethical principles Jesus enunciated was truthfulness—let your yea be yea and your nay be nay. He stated this does not only deal with not swearing oaths but that all our communications and actions must unequivocally state our intentions. It means, for example, not withholding relevant information if you are an employer; it means a full day's work for a full day's pay if you are an employee.

The Matthew 5 statement of Jesus is derived in part from Leviticus 19:12 (KJV), which states, "Ye shall not steal nor deal falsely nor lie to one another. And ye shall not swear by my name falsely and so profane the name of your God. I am the Lord." It seems to be implied that the oath is called into play to impress the neighbor or the customer or the boss that my words are as good as my acts. Can it be that the oath may apply to a written contract, to a warranty, to fanfare about the integrity of my work or promising to pay my debts? It seems that promises are kept not by loud protestations but by deeds.

Jesus said, "Let what you say be simply yes or no; anything more than this comes from evil." How can we do business with that kind of a contract? Is it not essential in this day and age to have everything spelled out so that there is no misunderstanding? That is not the issue. The issue is being true to the agreement no matter how much you write into the contract or advertisement or what you verbally promised to do. What counts is what you do do.

The problem Christians face in all our transactions is to live up to the trust we apparently have with our customers. The solar story has a happy ending because the customer had integrity; his yea meant just that. What keeps running through my mind, however, is a different scenario. What if the customer had turned out to be a conniving exploiter? Where would our yea have taken us? I'll give you a clue why we have not worried about this too much. Via the grapevine we knew that this person had a fine reputation. I don't know what he knew about our yea and nay.



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Evangelism at a soup kitchen

Ruth Teichroeb

After a brisk walk through a chilly Winnipeg morning, I arrived for my first visit to Agape Table. At 9:30 a.m. the community center off Broadway was already filling up with people seeking refuge from the cold. Numerous cups of coffee and conversation would help pass the time until the daily free lunch of soup and bread was served. Squeezing into the cramped kitchen, I joined several weekly volunteers from a Catholic church in peeling potatoes for the next day's soup.

Having recently moved to Winnipeg to begin work as the Canadian staff person for Mennonite Voluntary Service, I was curious about what local churches were already doing to respond to human need in the city. I soon heard about the interchurch-sponsored Agape Table.

When my duties in the kitchen were finished, I ventured out beyond the security of my tasks to mingle with the lunchtime crowd. I was soon caught up in conversation with a young French Canadian—Pierre. He had traveled west looking for work, and after several months with no success had ended up in Winnipeg. Trying to survive the winter on a day-to-day basis had forced him to swallow his pride and come to Agape Table. Yet despite such hardships, Pierre was infectiously jovial and succeeded in lifting the spirits of those around him as we shared lunch.

As I talked with Pierre, I noticed a man across the table listening intently. When I got up to leave, he turned his gaze upon me and asked, "Did you say you work for the church?" I said I did. His next question took me by surprise. "Do you know where I could go to learn more about the Bible?" He explained he was Hindu and had arrived in Canada from India two years before. He had become interested in the teachings of Jesus and wanted to learn more. Being new to the city myself, I wasn't sure what to suggest. Was there a church that would accept this gray-bearded, shabbily-dressed man into their midst? I gave him several suggestions, hoping that my anxiety about the reception he'd receive would be proven wrong.

My visit to Agape Table left me both strangely uplifted and saddened. We fed 300 people that day—a steady stream of teenagers, parents with young children at their side, drifters and those newly confronted by poverty's grim face. Yet in the midst of this crowd of worn-out, hungry people my two brief encounters sparked hope. Pierre had touched me with his warmth, and the other man (who never did tell me his name) was a seeker of truth in the unlikely setting of a soup kitchen.

A soup kitchen in Saginaw, Mich.: 'Jesus would be at home there. . . .'

I had read articles about poverty in the *Winnipeg Free Press.* But until I went to Agape Table I had stayed emotionally disconnected from the plight of poor people in this city. It took a deliberate decision to go to Agape Table before our paths even crossed. Most of us are effectively isolated in our day-to-day life from personal contact with those who are poor. We are isolated by where we live, where we work and where we worship.

At Agape Table I was reminded of Jesus' special love for those who are on the fringes of society. Jesus would be at home there among people who have been abandoned by our success-oriented culture. That raises some hard questions for us who call ourselves his followers. Are we willing to offer food to those who are hungry *and* to open ourselves to mutual relationships? To respond to immediate needs *and* to take the risk of confronting unjust structures which contribute to our sisters' and brothers' pain?

The challenges I encountered at Agape Table that morning are a reflection of what Mennonite Voluntary Service seeks to address. MVS volunteers work alongside local churches struggling to meet human need in their communities. We are also committed to helping the church speak to related issues of peace and justice in our world.

Like the handful of Christians who run Agape Table, each of us must search out our own response to Jesus' call. In our response we also discover the gift of new life for ourselves.

Ruth Teichroeb, 600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, MB R3P 0M4, is the associate director for Mennonite Voluntary Service in Canada.

Just help someone else

Sanford and Orpha Eash

That section of Wisconsin was simply beautiful last June. It had rolling hills with hay and corn fields in different hues of green and well-kept farm buildings in complementing colors. We drove in at the home of David and Nancy Zimmer. There was no one at the house, yet there were signs of much activity. David had seen us coming—from out in the field where he was working—and came rushing up to meet us. He is a big man in his early 30s—bearded and a fast talker. We introduced ourselves.

"Mennonites?" he reflected, then grinned. "No Mennonites will leave this place without putting their feet under our table," he announced. He hurried out to the dairy barn and brought out his wife, a little besplattered with dairy; she was doing the milking. Nancy is a soft-spoken, pretty little lady—maybe a bit shy. "We caught 100 bluegills yesterday and you are eating with us this evening," David insisted.

He had grown up in a strong Catholic home, Nancy a Lutheran. Neither of their parents sympathized with them, and they admitted to having clashed too often in past years. They live in a community where people look out for themselves, so the Zimmers had few real neighbors. David and Nancy had tried to prove to their parents that they could find the right church and also pay for their farm. It became a rat race, and it was hard.

The Zimmer family (left to right): Janet, Bobbie, David, Nancy and Kelly enjoy a family meal.

Joy has come again to the Zimmers in part because of the witness for Christ by Mennonite Disaster Service, who rebuilt their dairy barn.

In July of 1980 a big thunderstorm and a mighty wind came along. It was late evening and the Zimmers were in town. In spite of warnings, they went home and barely made it into their basement. The house shook up and down but stayed in place. When they got outside, the top part of the two-story dairy barn was gone; the bottom part, where the 40 cows were milked, had stayed intact. They borrowed an electric generator to milk for six days. It rained every day and the exposed hay got soaked and there was water in the milking area.

The insurance man told them everything would be taken care of, but a few days later, due to a technicality, he refused to pay. David and Nancy sat down on that big pile of soggy, smelly hay and looked at the mess around them. They wept. They looked at each other and agreed, "It's no use; let's just quit."

Then Nancy saw an MDS ad in the paper offering free help. They called the Mennonite Disaster Service number and their area representative came to see them. He encouraged them before he left. A few days later he called back and said, "There's a busload of people from Lancaster, Pa., coming to help. Should the Red Cross feed them?"

"No, we want to feed them." They expected a van load; instead there were 40 people. The Zimmers went to an all-night grocery and bought food—lots of it. There were four women with the group who helped cook and babysat the three Zimmer children.

The men cleaned up all the debris—everywhere. They rebuilt the bottom part of the barn and left. When the material came for the top part, another crew arrived and built that.

"We found people who care," the Zimmers told us. "We never saw anything like it. We couldn't imagine people who didn't even know us making that much effort for us."

It changed their attitude toward people. However, David still had problems getting his priorities straight. He had health problems. Twice in the next year he had to be hospitalized "to get my oil changed." Nancy was left alone with the family and with all the cows.

Gradually things changed for the better and he regained his health. Today they are a happy, dedicated, committed Christian family. There is a little Lutheran church in the neighborhood. When they seriously started attending it, they discovered friendly people. Today they are members. They take their children fishing and encourage them to study and appreciate wildlife and nature. They still have financial problems, but they do the best they can. They try to put first things first.

Not long ago David had asked an MDS man, "What can we do to repay you?" The man thought a bit, then said, "Just help someone else."

Sanford and Orpha Eash, 64349 SRB, Goshen, IN 46526, are a retired couple enjoying travels across Canada and the United States. They do free-lance writing and photography as a hobby.

Bharatiya General Conference

Church in India teetering on brink of schism

Newton, Kan.—Internal strife and litigation over conference procedure in a number of circumstances over the past two years has polarized the leadership of the Bharatiya (India) General Conference Mennonite Church into two main camps, bringing the church there to the brink of a major schism.

The major points of argument between the two factions concern the right of several individuals to serve as voting delegates to a church conference two years ago and the right of the national church to defrock pastors who dissent from member congregations.

Like most church leadership problems, the present state of crisis in India is inextricably connected to a complicated mixture of contributing factors, such as personality clashes and legalism. However, the current dilemma is seen by some as a struggle for power and property within the BGCMC, accentuated by the rapid decline in the number of General Conference missionaries from North America in India over the past 10 years because of new restrictions imposed by the Indian government. In 1972, 29 missionaries were serving there; in 1982, there were only three.

"The incident which dramatically deepened the rift within the BGCMC was a decision by the conference on Nov. 18, 1982, not to recognize the delegates from three of the churches who had elected two sets of delegates," said the Commission on Overseas Mission's secretary for Asia Peter Kehler. "The first set had been elected as prescribed by the constitution, but it was reported that some of them had not contributed 6 percent of their income to the conference as stipulated in the constitution. (The constitution states that no person can be a voting delegate who has not contributed 6 percent of his income to the conference during the year.)

"Without investigating whether this was true, the secretary of the conference ordered the three churches to elect another set of delegates. This was done when very few church members were present and contrary to the constitution, which states that elections may only be held after the intent to hold elections has been announced on two consecutive Sundays.

"When both sets of delegates came to the conference, a decision had to be made as to which set of delegates would have the right to vote. One of the members present, Noor Masih of Saraipali, Madhya Pradesh, who challenged the constitutionality of conference proceedings in court in earlier years, insisted that contributions had been made on behalf of the original set of delegates. When action was taken denying voting privileges to either set of delegates, Masih and another delegate filed a complaint with a local magistrate, who issued a stay order on the conference," Kehler explained.

A month later, on Dec. 19, 1982, the court granted permission for the conference to continue functioning but did not absolve them from other infractions.

One of those other quarrels concerns the right of the conference to disqualify or defrock a pastor who has begun meeting with a group of members apart from the church to which he was assigned. In 1981, Kehler said, a group of members within the Champa (M.P.) church became dissatisfied with their pastor, Harihar Mahapatra, and tried to bar him from entering the church. Several weeks later, the BGCMC executive attempted to censure Mahapatra by refusing to allow him to serve as a delegate from his church at the annual conference.

Because of the alienation which resulted from both the conference and his church, Mahapatra and more than half of his church members began meeting at a separate location and aligned themselves with Noor Masih and his supporters. When the conference took action to disqualify him from serving as pastor within the BGCMC, Mahapatra undertook litigation, asking that the courts force the conference to reinstate him as pastor. That case is continuing.

According to Kehler and others who are familiar with the Indian church, a host of dynamics play into the struggle. Among these are caste, poverty, the place of litigation in Indian society and the travel opportunities that go with holding an executive position during years when Mennonite World Conference is being held.

So far, COM personnel and others have been unsuccessful in trying to act as mediators in the conflict or bringing about any change. "They have suggested various solutions to the problem, but animosities lie deep and both groups insist that justice must be served," Kehler said. He and COM executive secretary Erwin Rempel were in India last March and consulted with both groups, but no progress was made.

Meanwhile, COM has been asked by the leader of the dissident group to recognize their members as an independent Mennonite conference. The commission has not yet responded to the request.

Reports reaching Kehler from the last BGCMC conference held in Korba (M.P.) on Oct. 25-29 indicate that the dissident group did not take part in the gathering.

COM intends to communicate the problems in India to its constituent congregations in North America by a special letter, asking that the matter be made a prayer concern. *Larry Cornies*

Mahapatra (center) and family in 1979: in the center of the storm

At special Manitoba session on camps

Delegates ask for more programming for adults, seniors

Morden, Man.—Our camps are providing a strong program for children and youth during the summer months, yet the camps as an extension of the congregation need to place more emphasis on ministry to adults, seniors and congregations.

This was one conclusion reached by more than 300 representatives to a special delegate session called by the committee on camping ministries of the Conference of Mennonites in Manitoba held Nov. 10 at the Morden Bergthaler Mennonite Church.

The purpose of the meeting was twofold: to hear CMM delegates' thoughts regarding future directions for the committee on camping ministries and to ask the question, Where do we go from here with program and with facilities?

After an introductory slide show featuring the three camps—Assiniboia near Headingly, Moose Lake in southeastern Manitoba, and Koinonia near the Peace Gardens in southwestern Manitoba—delegates responded to an informational packet which had been distributed to churches before the meeting. The packet presented basic details on all three camps and summarized the work of a long-range task force on camping, which reported at the annual conference in February.

After discussion, a findings committee was given the task of collecting the opinions of the delegates, who concluded that the camping ministry has many strengths, including an outreach to non-Mennonite people, an integration of physical, emotional and spiritual nurture, and natural settings in three distinct geographic locations.

Though children's programs and facilities are excellent, there tends to be a lack of program for adults, seniors and congregations.

Other weaknesses mentioned at the conference included a lack of strong human resources for special emphases, not enough evangelism (although the definition of evangelism needed some clarification) and a lack of focus for outdoor programming.

Vision for camping in Manitoba included supporting all three camps equally, providing modular facilities for family and other group camping, winterizing more of the existing facilities, installing trailer hook-ups and using facilities such as Elim Bible Institute in Altona for workshops and retreating during the summer months when all the camps are fully utilized.

Another question asked by delegates was, Is there a need to diversify rather than duplicate services and facilities at all three camps?

The committee on camping ministries is now considering the findings committee report and will present specific proposals at the annual CMM sessions in February 1984. *Robb Nickel*

Emergency food drive on for Lebanon, Guatemala, Kampuchea

Winnipeg (MCCC)—Emergency food needs in Lebanon, Guatemala and Kampuchea have prompted Mennonite Central Committee Canada to launch a special 1983-84 food drive. The drive, which began Dec. 1, will last until the end of March 1984. MCC Canada hopes to raise $300,000 toward the purchase of canned meat for Lebanon, beans and corn for Guatemala and rice for Kampuchea.

The food needs in Lebanon and Guatemala are the result of civil war in both countries. In Lebanon, over 30,000 Christian and Muslim families have been displaced by the bitter fighting, and entire villages have been destroyed. The Middle East Christian Council asked MCC to help by providing canned meat for people who can no longer work or farm their land. The council also asked MCC to send some cans without the distinctive MCC label, which bears the MCC cross and dove symbol and the words, "In the name of Christ," because of the fighting between Christians and Muslims. Many of the Muslim refugees were made homeless by Christian bombs and artillery.

Recognizing the bitterness felt by some refugees, MCC agreed to make cans of commercial meat available to them, even though there are enough cans of MCC meat in stock to supply the entire Lebanese need. The 17 tons of commercial meat, which will cost $57,000, will be sent together with 20 tons of MCC meat.

The Guatemalan civil conflict has left thousands of Guatemalan Indian families without a husband and father. This is particularly tragic since traditional Indian families depend on men to provide food while women look after the children. Widowed Indian mothers are often unable to adequately provide for their children and themselves.

MCC is responding by giving food to women and children in areas hardest hit by the conflict. Relief programs have already begun in Chimaltenango province, where MCC is supplying a daily meal for 2,000 women and children, and in Quiche province, where 500 fatherless families are receiving 20 kilograms (45 lbs.) of food monthly. The project, which is expected to last until February 1984, will cost $70,800.

The southeast Asian country of Kampuchea is no stranger to war, having suffered through bombing, civil strife and the 1978 invasion by Vietnam. Kampuchea's attempts at recovery are hampered by diplomatic isolation in the United Nations community and, most recently, by a drought in the southern part of the country. Emergency supplies of rice are needed in order to prevent widespread hunger.

Since U.S. policy prevents MCC from sending funds collected in the United States to Kampuchea, Canadian supporters of MCC are being asked to contribute to the $1,170,000 cost of rice. The Canadian government permits non-government agencies to send money collected in Canada to Kampuchea, although it will not send government funds. Bert Lobe, MCC secretary for East Asia, says that "MCC contributions of food should not be seen as support for or opposition to the present government. Our contributions should be seen as a sign of our care."

J. M. Klassen, executive director of MCC Canada, says that "MCC must respond to these needs because they exist and because we are aware of them. We must also respond because Mennonites and Brethren in Christ have, I believe, the means as well as the motivation to respond."

Contributions to the 1983-84 Food Drive can be sent to MCC Canada, 201-1483 Pembina Highway, Winnipeg, MB R3T 2C8, or to a provincial MCC office.

Americans are more likely to attend church regularly if their fathers did when they were growing up, according to a sociological researcher at the University of Minnesota.

A chapel service and a board decision to improve on-campus nursery facilities recently highlighted the special contributions and needs of preschool children at the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Ind. Some of the 60 preschool children in this year's seminary families invited parents and friends to worship with them children's style in a chapel service in October. The children sang "The Butterfly Song," shared a favorite story about a hungry caterpillar and made sure that no one left the service without a hug. Meanwhile, the seminary boards during their October session approved plans for more adequate nursery facilities.

Children lead the seminary in worship.

Mennonite church in Zaire disclaims connection to WCC

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—The Mennonite Church in Zaire (CMZA) does not consider itself a member of the World Council of Churches, nor was anyone delegated by CMZA to be their representative to the WCC's assembly in Vancouver last summer.

That is the gist of a response by Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission executive secretary James Bertsche to Donovan Smucker and his report on the World Council's Vancouver gathering. Smucker attended the WCC assembly as an official observer, delegated by the General Conference.

In his report to the General Board and in related articles on the convention (see Oct. 25 issue of *The Mennonite*), Smucker stated that "the Mennonite Church in Zaire has been a member of its national [ecumenical body] since 1973. They are also listed as members in the WCC Handbook." Bertsche took up the matter with Smucker immediately but wrote to CMZA for confirmation of his understanding that the national church had no such connection to the WCC.

In a letter to Smucker dated Nov. 16, copies of which were circulated to several church newspaper editors, Bertsche quotes from a letter from CMZA vice president Mukanza Ilunga explaining the position of his church.

"Since the last church assembly of Mbuji Mayi, it has been clearly decided that the CMZA is not a member of the WCC," Mukanza wrote. "The problem is in the WCC camp, which continues to consider the CMZA as a member in spite of the letter of renunciation written by our Brother Kabangy (the previous CMZA president) before his death. In spite of this letter, the WCC office continues to write to us as a member. Following the decision of our church, we ignore such correspondence since we consider ourselves to be non-members. With regard to the representation of the CMZA in the person of Reverend Kabongo Bukasa, the thing seems not to be true. Our brother Kabongo was not at Vancouver, nor was the CMZA represented," Ilunga wrote.

Volunteers in El Salvador say 'real work' lies in U.S.

San Salvador (MCC)—Jim and Ann Hershberger from Harrisonburg, Va., are nurses in a short-term Mennonite Central Committee assignment 70 miles east of here. Recently they reported on their work and their impressions of El Salvador.

In El Salvador, a country the size of Massachusetts, an estimated 1 million Salvadorans (one-fifth of the population) have had to leave their homes due to civil war. The Salvadoran government, which has received over $1 billion in U.S. aid over the past three years, is waging a four-year-old civil war against opposition forces. Over 40,000 civilians have died in the war.

Over 12,000 inhabitants of the town where the Hershbergers live are peasants who fled from their villages. Most of these people live in three camps on the outskirts of town.

The Hershbergers have started weekly health classes for health promoters in these camps. They have taught them how to treat and prevent diarrhea, parasites, and eye and respiratory infections—the most common ailments among the refugees. These health promoters have received training in basic health as well, so that they are able to distribute medicines as needed among the refugees and to promote preventive health practices.

The Hershbergers feel that they have helped, in a small way, to bring hope and healing to the refugees in their town. However, they feel that "the real work to help El Salvador must be done in the United States." They report that in the town where they work there are constant reminders of U.S. support for the Salvadoran government.

U.S. AID is sponsoring a job creation project in their town. Unemployment in El Salvador is an estimated 50 percent, so the refugees and poor townspeople are happy for the work. The men who pave the muddy streets with rocks are paid six colones ($1.50 U.S.) a day, even though the minimum wage for all-day labor in El Salvador is 13 colones ($3.25 U.S.). Other local businesses lowered their daily wage, when they realized that the job creation project was paying less than the minimum wage.

The Hershbergers feel that what is needed is "authentic work projects" for the unemployed and hungry refugees. The refugees mostly farmed their own plots or rented plots before they were forced to flee. Thousands of acres surrounding the town remain idle, property of absent landowners. The Hershbergers suggest that U.S. AID money be used to rent the land so that refugees can plant their own corn.

On Sept. 15, Salvadorans celebrated Central American Independence Day. The military let the refugees know that if they did not march in the parades they would risk a cut-off in aid. Jim says, "The notion of a 'developing democracy' (President Reagan's description of the situation in El Salvador) seems quite an exaggeration from what we see here. The military seems firmly in control of all activities."

Stopping the Nuclear Clock, a radio spot campaign developed by the Commission on Home Ministries' Media Division and Mennonite Board of Missions' Media Ministries, was the recipient of a 1983 Gabriel Award. The Gabriel Awards Competition is sponsored each year by Unda, an association of international Catholic broadcasters and communicators, to honor commercial and public service programming in the United States and Canada. The *Stopping the Nuclear Clock* campaign is currently heard on over 100 radio stations throughout North America.

The peace and social concerns committee of the Western District Conference has acted on a recent conference motion to send a letter of support and understanding to European churches regarding demonstrations against new missile deployments there. Signed by conference minister Frank Keller and program coordinator David Habegger, the letter was sent to the Mennonite conferences of West Germany, the Netherlands and Switzerland. The letter says, in part, "Let us pray and work together that governments will set aside weapons of destruction and that they will seek the welfare of persons throughout the world."

More than 75 churches around the United States are sheltering Central American refugees—mostly from El Salvador—who are subject to deportation by U.S. federal authorities, according to *Fellowship* magazine. In recent months, one church a week has added its name to the list of congregations willing to offer sanctuary. Dozens of other churches have helped by providing food, clothing or other assistance. There is also a network of churches that quietly assist refugees passing through the United States on the way to Canada.

Caution: First World visitors have been known to faint here

Deschapelles, Haiti (MCC)—Step into the pediatrics ward of Hospital Albert Schweitzer. The children you see suffer from malnutrition: they have rust-colored hair, spidery bodies and bellies like gourds.

The one in the crib sipping milk from a tin cup might not survive. First World visitors have been known to faint here.

But four Mennonite Central Committee volunteers see this scene every day. Nurses Esther Cassel from Souderton, Pa., Lea Gullickson from North Newton, Kan., Joanne Eno from Redondo Beach, Calif., and Ken Lind from Portland, Ore., are helping to bring health to the Artibonite Valley. They work in the hospital clinic and in pediatrics and surgery.

MCC has worked with Hospital Albert Schweitzer for 25 years. The hospital, founded by Gwen and Larry Mellon, provides health services for the 150,000 people living in the Artibonite Valley, most of whom are peasant farmers who eke out a subsistence living growing rice, millet or corn on their one- to two-acre plots of land.

Medical practice is different at the 150-bed Hospital Albert Schweitzer, since the patients are poorer and often sicker than those in the United States. And they wait longer before they come in for treatment, say the nurses. Diseases rare or unheard of in North America—kwashiorkor (malnutrition in small children caused by a lack of protein), typhoid fever, malaria and tuberculosis—are common here. Even the injuries are those of an impoverished rural society. A farmer breaks his leg and arm falling from his mountainside garden. A child burns himself crawling into the cooking fire in his home.

A patient's stay at the hospital begins at the clinic, where Cassel works. She says the clinic serves as an emergency ward as well as an out-patient department. And patients not sick enough for immediate admission can stay there with a family member. (The cost of a clinic visit is $3, compared with $6 per day in the ward.) In the morning, doctors examine the patients and decide whom to admit.

Ken Lind and Esther Cassel check medical chart in Hospital Albert Schweitzer.

The nurses say that the patients sometimes wait until it is too late before they seek help. Cassel says this is because many people visit village herbal doctors first. They come to the clinic with poke marks on their arms, X's scratched on their heads or leaves tied around their heads or stomachs in an attempt to cure their ailments.

Once they have been examined at the clinic, the patients in need of hospital treatment are admitted for medical care.

Gullickson recently helped initiate a program that allows mothers to stay overnight with their children. She says she hopes the death rate will drop among malnourished children with mothers there to feed, scold and care for them. Out of 50 patients now in the pediatric unit, Gullickson says 30 suffer from malnutrition.

Sometimes it is too late to help the patient. Gullickson has had to break the news to a child that his friend in the next bed died the night before.

She says, "Sometimes, if a kid is close to death, it's almost like they wait for a person to come—for a human touch. And then they can die."

Eno's work in the medical unit brings her into contact with a variety of illnesses. Typhoid and malaria are common, along with cardiac and kidney problems, high blood pressure and ulcers. At times she has to calm patients with cerebral malaria who rip intravenous tubes from their arms.

She is also responsible for the tuberculosis isolation ward, where the patients, she says, "look like something I'd only seen in pictures of concentration camps."

Lind assists in a variety of surgeries: for people who have fallen off horses or been hit by trucks, or those with tumors. Working with visiting doctors who might know little Creole, he sometimes acts as a go-between for doctors and patients.

Lind says his work at the hospital has changed his view of medicine in North America. "At home we run to the doctor for every little whim and ache and pain. We don't appreciate the good health we have. Here, when health care is given, it is greatly appreciated."

Still, questions remain for the nurses. As Gullickson says, "Sometimes at night I still sit there and say, 'Why, God? Why do people have to be (sick) like this?' . . . But when I was at home recently I saw the materialism and the cocktail parties and the kinds of things that were important to people, and I thought, 'Good grief, they're just as sick.' " *Russell Working*

Ernst Weichselberger, director of Paraguayan Mennonite Service Program, reports that volunteers have begun rebuilding in response to May floods near Asuncion. On Oct. 10 Weichselberger asked Mennonite Central Committee for financial assistance to rebuild an elementary school in the Puerto Botanico slum area of Asuncion. International Mennonite Organization, a European counterpart to MCC, is contributing $12,000 toward the project. MCC is contributing $10,000.

John Linscheid, pastor of the Lawrence (Kan.) Mennonite Fellowship, delivered a message of hope to more than 1,000 people gathered on Campanile Hill at the University of Kansas immediately following the airing of "The Day After" on ABC on Nov. 20. The film was a fictional portrayal of the destruction of the Kansas City and Lawrence areas during a nuclear holocaust. Many residents of Lawrence had been extras in the movie. At the rally, Linscheid challenged his audience to accept "a Power that transcends the force of nuclear arms. . . . I invite you to touch that Power and begin to pray for peace."

When we live a life of indivisible wholeness we discover that "before the glory and greatness of God our self-sufficient selves become like a dish of ice cream in a microwave," visiting lecturer Hugo Zorilla said in a chapel address at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Ind. Zorilla, professor of New Testament at Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Fresno, Calif., was guest lecturer at AMBS Oct. 12-13. Throughout his visit Zorilla emphasized a life of obedience to the radical call of the liberating gospel. "Only when I care for my brother and sister does my devotion have meaning," he said.

MCC takes village-level view of Philippines to Washington

Washington (MCC)—Mennonite Central Committee representatives Bert Lobe, Patricia Wagner, Earl Martin and Betsy Byler shared a village-based view of the turbulent Philippines with John Monjo, deputy assistant secretary of state for Asia, and congressional representatives and staffers during two days of appointments in Washington Nov. 8-9.

The delegation visited eight offices, expressing concern about the rising level of military confrontation in the Philippines.

The delegation told those they visited, "Our primary identification lies with the ordinary citizens of the Philippines, rather than with any organized political group. We want to share that perspective with you."

(Left to right) Earl Martin, Betsy Byler, Bert Lobe and Patty Wagner

Patty Wagner, who recently returned from a three-year MCC assignment in Cotabato, Mindanao, told of her work in areas where the Philippine armed forces, the Moro (Muslim) National Liberation Front and the (Marxist) New People's Army are fighting.

MCC Secretary for East Asia Bert Lobe told those the delegation visited that he saw more violence in the rural areas during his September 1983 visit than he had noticed on previous visits.

Earl Martin, who worked among landless farmers in Bukidnon on the island of Mindanao from 1978 to 1982, confirmed Lobe's observations that farmers and poor people are caught in a web of violence. Farmers who have been homesteading for years on a plot of land suddenly discover that rich Filipinos or foreign companies have acquired legal title to their land. These farmers are asked to leave the land, sometimes at the point of Philippine army guns.

The appointments were arranged by Betsy Byler of MCC U.S. Peace Section Washington staff.

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COE staffers attend religious education convention

Anaheim, Calif. (GCMC)—Five staff members from the General Conference's Commission on Education attended the Religious Education Association meeting in Anaheim Nov. 19-22. The theme was "Pursuing Justice and Peace: Challenge to Religious Educators."

"Peace and justice are themes Mennonites hear about all the time," said Elizabeth Yoder, general editor for the commission and one of the COE staff members attending the convention. "Many religious educators from other traditions, however, were hearing the cries of the Third World in a new way and were struggling with how to take the message back to parish, synagogue and congregation. They will face criticism, they will lose support of wealthy members and some will even lose their jobs if they speak too pointedly about peace and justice issues."

Yoder said that for many the highlight of the convention was the presentation of the William Rainey Harper Award to Paulo and Elza Freire, whose pioneering literacy programs with the poor of South America gave rise to the concept of conscientization as a fundamental aspect of adult learning.

So that the REA experience would not be all theoretical and intellectual, the program included *Encuentros*—field trip experiences to meet people and programs in situations of poverty and/or oppression. For the COE staff these experiences were the most meaningful of the convention.

Besides Yoder, COE staff attending were J. W. Sprunger, executive secretary, James Dunn, secretary for church school education, Paula Diller Lehman, secretary for youth education, and Edna Dyck, secretary for children's education. Yoder also helped lead a workshop on "Educating for Peace: the Historic Peace Church Perspective."

Ruth Obold, member of the Hoffnungsau Mennonite Church in Inman, Kan., has developed a series of children's peace studies materials for use in her congregation's Wednesday evening forums. She took on the task after a fruitless search to find a suitable curriculum for children on the subject at the request of the church's education committee. Obold wrote her materials for kindergarten through grade 8, dividing them into three levels: personal, school and national issues, and world issues. Faith and Life Press, Newton, Kan., is considering the material for publication.

The 1982 conviction of Mark Schmucker on the charge of failing to register for the draft was overturned Nov. 25 by the 6th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Cincinnati, which ordered the case returned to U.S. District Court in Cleveland. The three-judge panel ruled that Schmucker should have received a hearing on his religious objections and that the federal government may have violated the Constitution through selective prosecution. The ruling in Schmucker's case, since it is based on a procedural matter, does not in itself create any precedent for other cases.

The membership of First Mennonite Church, Allentown, Pa., has overwhelmingly approved a request for office space from Action for Nuclear Disarmament. AND opened an office adjacent to the pastor's study in the church several weeks ago. AND works to educate the public and influence legislators about the horror of nuclear war. It is the primary group in the Lehigh Valley working for passage of a bilateral, verifiable nuclear weapons freeze between the United States and the Soviet Union.

Student aid needs met but more money needed

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—Nearly $22,000 has been contributed or loaned to the General Conference's student aid fund for non-registrants, reports James L. Dunn, secretary for young adult education. Roughly half has come from constituents in the form of contributions; the other half in loans. Of the total, about $1,000 has come from Canada.

The above-budget student aid fund for non-registrants was established by the Commission on Education and the Commission on Home Ministries upon the approval of the General Conference's General Board in March. The so-called "Solomon Amendment," which became law in the United States on July 1, prohibits any male student who has not complied with requirements to register with the Selective Service System from receiving federal grants or loans.

Robert Hull, CHM secretary for peace and justice, observes that while the conference encourages young men to register as conscientious objectors in anticipation of alternative service consistent with their Christian beliefs, it also affirms those whose consciences do not allow them to register for the draft. The 1971 GC statement on the issue says, "We recognize noncooperation with the military draft, when based on loyalty to Jesus, as a valid witness. We pledge the resources of our brotherhood to a supportive ministry to young men who take such a stand."

Dunn reports that the fund has been able to replace all grants lost by 11 students at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., for the 1983-84 school year. Other non-registrants enrolled at Bethel reported no need for the aid. The fund is also available to students at Bluffton (Ohio) College and Freeman (S.D.) Junior College as well as GC students at other institutions who, by virture of conscience, are non-registrants.

"The church deserves to be warmly praised for its significant support of its non-registrants, both in prayer and in its generous contributions to help share some of the cost of conscience to these young men," says Dunn.

According to COE's church school education office, additional contributions or loans totaling approximately $5,000 are needed to cover loans to the 11 non-registrants for the second term.

Anyone able to contribute to the fund or provide loan monies at 9 percent interest is invited to contact the Commission on Education, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.

GC projects receive $20,000 in MMA grants

Goshen, Ind. (MMA)—Perspective '84, a Hopi alcohol rehabilitation program and a video tape of H. A. Fast are three of seven projects receiving grants from Mennonite Mutual Aid's fraternal funds.

Other projects funded by 1983 grants include educational meetings of Chinese pastors and spouses, overseas pastors visitation, reorganization of Commission on Home Ministries program and a study course on people facing difficulties. All seven programs will share the total of $20,000 for General Conference grants.

The MMA board of directors approved a total of $137,800 in grants for Mennonite denominational and interdenominational projects at its semiannual meeting in Rosemont, Ill., Nov. 18. The projects are selected according to their contribution to mutual aid, stewardship, church relationships, reconciliation and leadership development.

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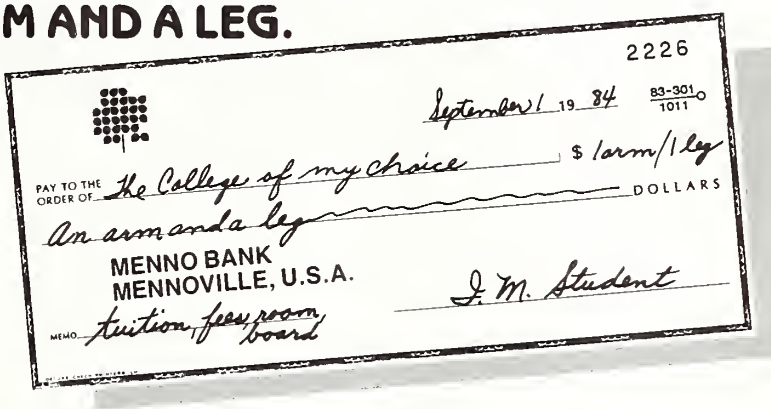

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Giving Love Is Worth the Risk

Hearing that Carolina stood only a small chance of surviving the operation she needed didn't stop the Hartzlers from adopting her. Nor did the mountains of paperwork, the expense, or the thousands of miles between them and the child.

Carolina Montes, a Colombian child abandoned at birth, became Carrie Marie Hartzler—**with the help of an Adoption Expense Grant from Mennonite Mutual Aid.**

"Being a family for a child who might not have had one has been a good experience for us," says Rachel Hartzler. Following surgery to correct a patent ductus in her heart, Carrie is a normal two-year-old . . . who wrestles with her brothers Joel and Aaron John . . . loves animals and swings . . . and smiles at photographers.

Says Rachel, "We have felt support from other families in our church and neighborhood with international children. Also, we value the emotional and financial support MMA has given us. Getting the grant made us feel as if we were doing the right thing, for Carrie and for us."

The Hartzlers have found sharing their lives with Carrie to be worth the risk. Others, too, have experienced sharing . . . thanks to your involvement with MMA.

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Has TV come out of the Mennonite closet?

Barth Hague

The conversation around the office the day after *The Day After* was pretty much as expected. Threat of nuclear holocaust was clearly on everyone's mind, and reactions to the *ABC Viewpoint* program which followed the made-for-TV movie provided fuel for seemingly endless debate about symptoms of a much larger social disorder.

But something happened Nov. 20 which for Mennonites and a few other Christian groups was perhaps more significant than a TV film dramatizing the nuclear vaporization of Kansas City. From pulpits across the United States (and, I presume, Canada) preachers were telling their parishioners to "watch TV this evening." Suddenly television, normally the antithesis of Mennonite doctrine and religious piety, was being preached about as morally significant.

In my home community alone six different churches were highlighted in the local newspapaer for planning sermons on the topic. Many Mennonites I talked to the following Monday—some of whom avoid television like the plague—said they watched *The Day After* only after hearing about it in church on Sunday morning. Has the Mennonite church finally crossed the great chasm that has separated it from secular media?

I recall a recent Television Awareness Training workshop I was leading in a Mennonite congregation. During the course of discussion one longtime member admitted (for the first time in public) that her family had purchased a TV set when she was a young girl. But, she admitted, it was always kept hidden in the closet when company called, and the antenna was erected in the attic so as not to arouse suspicions among other Mennonites in the community. Curiously, other folks "went public" with similar memories after hearing her testimony. And now we're preaching about this thing in church.

Actually, I respect those who claim they possess the self-discipline to limit or even eliminate their TV viewing. My hunch is, though, that most of them simply aren't admitting their heavy viewing habits. The rest are an extremely queer lot in this telecommunications age.

November 20 was a significant day for the anti-nuke crowd (of which I admit being a card-carrying member), and I wouldn't deny them that satisfaction. But *The Day After* Sunday was also significant for many Christians in a different way. Finally we realized Marshall McLuhan's "cool" medium is at least "lukewarm." I think we proved to ourselves that television holds great potential for communicating important program material despite its cancerous commercialization.

So a hearty thanks to Edward Hume for writing the screenplay and suffering the lewd remarks of the Religious Right. Thanks to ABC for taking a financial dunking and to the advertisers for risking the prospect of boycotts. And thanks to you preachers for recommending *The Day After* in your sermons that Sunday morning. Thanks to all of you "pioneers."

Residents of Lawrence, Kan., at a candlelight vigil following The Day After

Barth Hague lives in Goshen, Ind., and is a member of College Mennonite Church.

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LETTERS

Response to Norman Chien

The letter from Norman Chien (July 19 issue) raises some deep concerns for the work of the Mennonite Church in Taiwan. I support Norman in his concern for more trained leadership for the Mennonite Church in Taiwan. COM continues to provide funds for this purpose.

I regret that some false impressions have been conveyed to Norman. I did write to Sheldon Sawatzky that Adam Liu would be returning to Taiwan and also informed him that we had requested that the circulation department delay sending the Aug. 31, 1982, issue of *The Mennonite* until the authorities had made a decision regarding Adam's application. We felt that some statements in the letter, if read by the authorities, could have created some complications. *The Mennonite* was sent six weeks later. Although Norman was not aware of it, Adam did contact a few of the pastors and church leaders while he was in Taiwan.

Readers of *The Mennonite* might be interested to know that Norman is an active member of the Mennonite church in Taiwan and that he has been instrumental in encouraging the Mennonite churches to become financially self-supporting.

I too regret that the churches in Taiwan, including the Mennonite church, are losing many of their members and pastors through emigration. There are many reasons for this, and we as citizens of this country know that questions related to this issue are not easy to resolve.

We would request prayer for the church in Taiwan and its leaders as they seek to live out their life of faith in the present situation. *Peter Kehler, COM secretary for Asia, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114*

Sept. 6

Other Mennonites at WCC

In my WCC article (Oct. 25 issue) I neglected to mention the excellent contributions made by some other Mennonites.

Arnold Regier, Newton, Kan., planned the peace and justice exhibition. June Lithgoe was chairperson of the Vancouver planning committee. Emory Wedel and Naomi Yanada, students at Bethel College, worked hard at the peace and justice exhibit and served at the coffeehouse with musical numbers.

I apologize to these Christian friends for failing to mention their share in the WCC Assembly. *Donovan E. Smucker, 119 Church St., Bluffton, OH 45817*

Nov. 2

The other side of humanism

In the Oct. 25 editorial "The Charter for Christian Humanism" you call for a wedding of Christianity and humanism. To join the popular system of secular humanism to Christianity is an impossibility, for they are totally at odds. Such a joining would create a philosophical monstrosity, a contradiction of beliefs and compromise to the core. A Christian can and should be humanitarian, that is, caring for humans in visible, helpful ways. So there can be Christian humanitarians but not genuine Christians who are at the same time genuine humanists.

Humanism is placing *man* at the center of all things and making him the measure of all things. Christianity places *God* at the center and measures all things by Jesus Christ. Dedicated humanists are devoutly anti-Christian. I was startled—in an issue featuring the Reformation and its purifying effects upon Christianity—to see an editorial calling for the revival of the very humanism which was at the root of the corruption of the medieval church.

I also object to a journalistic ploy you used in the first paragraph of your editorial to emotionally influence your readers to your point of view. You are using a personal attack on the character of a person or group of people—here conservative Christians, "evangelical orthodoxy." It is unfair as well as intellectually diverting to categorize all Christian anti-humanists as "smug" or "ready to pounce on almost anybody." Arriving at the truth of a matter should be kept free of all such personal prejudice. All of us do, indeed, have problems with pride or "blind spots" which we must deal with personally before God, but these are subjective matters. Not all evangelicals are characteristically proud. Many are humbly aware of their unworthiness before God and have a deep concern for fellow Christians. We need to study the matter objectively and above all allow the Bible to be the guide, rather than the fallible thinking of human minds.

I cannot agree with you that it is important what other branches of knowledge think of our theology. It is critical to me what God thinks of it. To say that we "must affirm other branches" of knowledge can quickly compromise our beliefs. This can be especially deadly because so much of modern scholarship denies God or at least his sovereignty over the affairs of man. To be overly sensitive to secular critique will cause us to bend spiritual truth to conform to the world's mold.

God has said of human wisdom: "Do not deceive yourselves. If anyone of you thinks he is wise by the standards of this age, he should become a fool so that he may become wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness in God's sight" (1 Corinthians 3:18-19a NIV).

Regardless of what the world says, we Christians affirm that "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom" and "knowledge" (Psalm 111:10 and Proverbs 1:7). An understanding of God through the study of the Bible should be the foundation of a Christian's knowledge as well as its pinnacle. All other knowledge should be built upon these concepts and not contradict God's revealed Word. Satan, the "father of lies," is the author of perversions of truth, of pseudoreligions, of pseudosciences and the vain and hopeless philosophies of the world. *Mrs. Vernon Klaassen, Route 1, Sedgwick, KS 67135*

Nov. 14

Editor's note: You make the point strongly once again about the dangers of secular humanism. I agree with those and point to them also in my editorial. To me your letter seems to verify the main point of my editorial. We Christians have become so sensitive to its dangers that we fail to see the significance of humanism from a Christian perspective. God comes to us in a fully human baby.

I see in our attitudes (not just among conservative Christians) a danger that we today are no longer open to fresh Reformations. Your side has been strongly represented; the other side is too easily ignored today.

Looking for nursing educator

We are looking for a nursing educator fluent in German who would be willing to come to Neuland Colony. Our Concordia Hospital is currently short of nurses, but we have people ready to learn. They need a qualified instructor who would be willing to teach at least two years. *Hans-Peter Braun, Casilla Correo 1153, Neuland Colony, Asuncion, Paraguay*

Nov. 15

A GC rarity in the United States

Bernie Wiebe

The General Conference mosaic of churches continues to change. In recent years we have been enriched by adding new Lao, Hispanic and Chinese churches. Indian churches have been part of the patchwork quilt for some time and gradually some new Indian churches are emerging.

GC Mennonites also have a long history of serving among black people. But today we have only a few black churches.

We once had more but it seems the civil rights movement caught us unprepared and some attrition resulted.

Recently I had opportunity to visit First Mennonite Church in Chicago on West 73rd. They celebrated their 65th anniversary since the building of the first Mennonite chapel, dedicated at 73rd and Laflin on Sept. 22, 1918.

The mission was organized into a church and charter members joined in 1920. A constitution was drawn up in 1928.

Numerous pastors have served terms at Chicago First Mennonite. John H. Burke, Jr., has been pastor since October 1972.

During Burke's term, the church has become financially self-supporting, shares in conference benevolences and sponsors other projects for needy people.

Among the active programs at First Mennonite, music stands out. The Sunday I visited, three choirs—children's, youth, inspirational—all sang special numbers. I arrived on the last day of a special series of Harvest Musical celebrations. They had special music nights followed by partaking of the fruits of harvest on display in the sanctuary.

The youth and adult classes were combined into one for this Sunday morning.

In the Sunday school, clearly there is much promise for the future. The large kindergarten class speaks well of First Mennonite's ministry to families.

Pastor Burke told me that their church faces many of today's urban problems. Fifty percent of the neighborhood youth are unemployed. Even with steel-reinforced doors and windows the church had experienced two break-ins within two months prior to my visit. Education is sought but often becomes too expensive.

First Mennonite, Chicago, has a couple of unique ministries. Once a year they sponsor a fashion show in the downtown Conrad Hilton hotel. It becomes an occasion for fund raising but also for witness and has proven to be a popular event.

An annual tea has also become widely known.

Lay participation is strong there. John Burke, Jr., maintains full-time work besides serving the church. Consequently many responsibilities are shared by lay people. There are ministers, deacons and others who seem to gladly carry duties in this active congregation.

My experience at Chicago First Mennonite was most inspiring. Even though a first-time visitor, I felt totally welcome. The Sunday school studies and sharing lasted 90 minutes. Our worship time (maybe it was due to this guest preacher from Winnipeg) was two hours. And God's Spirit seemed so obviously present.

Then we shared a common meal, most delicious and plenty for everybody. Shut-ins were served by delivering meals also to them.

I had to leave before the afternoon final service of the festival, and I regret that. My spirit wanted to stay. Any of the leftover harvest products were to be distributed and taken home following the afternoon praise service.

Thank God that in the GC mosaic there is also First Mennonite Church of Chicago.

Mamie Burke was teaching a large and excited kindergarten class.

Euromissiles for Christmas

William Keeney

This month the United States hopes to deploy cruise and Pershing II missiles in five European NATO countries: England, the Netherlands, Belgium, West Germany and Italy. If placed as scheduled they will be the first U.S. cruise missiles in Europe. The weapons will greatly increase the possibility of a nuclear war.

The cruise and Pershing II missiles increase this danger because they offer less time for any correction if a mistake is made. The missiles will be able to attack Soviet missile silos and command posts with only four to eight minutes of warning time. The cruise missiles are particularly dangerous because they fly below the level at which they can be detected by radar. They are also small enough to be moved about on a truck and fired from any location.

The cruise missile also makes any arms control agreement less likely since it can have either a nuclear or nonnuclear (conventional) warhead. That along with its small size and mobility complicates the problem of telling whether or not those with such weapons are abiding by any restrictions on the number of weapons. The problem of verification which the U.S. has insisted on so strenuously to date becomes even more problematic.

The new weapons may cause the Soviets to move to a Launch on Warning (LOW) strategy. That means that they will be prepared to retaliate with a nuclear response any time a suspected attack is signaled. No time will be taken to check with Moscow or to use the hotline between Moscow and Washington to check out intentions.

Anyone familiar with the number of errors in electronic warning systems should be aware of how much LOW strategies raise the risk of a nuclear war by mistake. The U.S. early warning systems have sounded alerts because of false signals received from the rising of the moon and from flocks of geese. Malfunctions of a computer piece that cost less than a dollar had U.S. planes in the air and on their way to Soviet targets and missiles out of their silos ready for launch before the error was discovered. The command posts had an assumed 20 to 30 minutes and had to contact the White House before the planes passed a no-return point or the missiles were launched (once missiles are launched, they have no recall).

The recent tragic incident with the Korean Airlines passenger plane downed in Soviet territorial waters illustrates how risky a LOW system can be. The Soviets had 2-2½ hours to track and identify the plane. They still could neither force it down nor apparently find out that it was a passenger plane.

With the cruise and Pershing II missiles the possibility of an error in judgment and a "trigger-happy" response could have even more tragic consequences. It could escalate into a major nuclear conflagration with a magnitude of death and destruction we cannot imagine.

William Keeney is visiting assistant professor of integrative change at Kent State University, Kent, Ohio 44240.

The planned deployment of the weapons has caused some of the biggest demonstrations ever seen in Europe.

Actions have taken place in England and West Germany to try to block the construction of sites for the cruise and Pershing II missiles. Demonstrations have occurred in the Netherlands and Belgium.

If the Euromissiles are deployed, the possibility of a mutual nuclear freeze is virtually certain to be dead. The problems of verifiability will make each side less open to accept a freeze.

While Christian peacemakers oppose all weapons and know how often opposition to a particular weapon system is either futile or has led to worse alternative systems development, the introduction of the Euromissiles imposes a significant new element of risk in triggering nuclear war. Therefore Christian peacemakers must consider joining in the opposition.

Even as we celebrate the coming of Jesus—Prince of Peace—this Christmas, Europe is being armed for a war that both U.S. and Soviet scientists now agree could wipe out the human race. Jesus comes to give life; nuclear war seems to mean the exact opposite.

MEDITATION

Another year of the Bible

Erlene Unruh

God
Thank you for the Bible
This "God-breathed" book of books that holds your story
Told through the living drama of the your people
Your story—acted out in the time and space of history
Your word of love and life—from the beginning and forever

Thank you for showing us who you are and what you do
Involving yourself in the tangled lives of your people
Thank you that your ways of interacting are timeless
And valid still today

Thank you for working with and through our humanness
Our faulty understanding, limited vision, disobedience
Our selfish rationalization, blind indifference and rebellion

Thank you for blessing our weak responses
For honoring our confession, repentance, obedience
Our acts of love, faith and worship

Thank you for risking our rejection
Giving us freedom to choose our destiny
Then planning the sacrifice of love
Through which we could be redeemed

Thank you for calling a covenant people
Through whom you could work out your plan
Teaching, guiding, forgiving, starting over
When we allowed sin to break our relationships

Thank you for using ordinary persons
Taking their strengths and weaknesses
Their temptations and victories
Their mistakes and visions
To teach us about your design for all

Thank you for Abraham, Moses and Joshua
Sarah, Ruth and Esther
For Rachel, Naomi and Hannah
Jacob, Joseph and David
For Jeremiah, Isaiah and Daniel
Thank you for allowing their stories to be told
And retold
And preserved at last in writing
To give us courage, inspiration, hope
And a vision of you

Thank you most of all for the Christ event
Sending him when the fullness of time had come
Jesus—Son of God—Son of man and woman
Fully human
Yet fully divine
The ultimate revelation of your will and who you are
The final measuring rod of truth
The completion of your salvation gift

Thank you for touching and changing lives through him
And for the Good News that covered the earth
Because of their faithfulness

Thank you for Mary, Lydia and Susanna
For Paul, Timothy and John
Peter, James and Stephen
For Matthew, Mark and Luke
Martha, Dorcas and Joanna

Thank you for preserving their stories
For the gospel message that continues to change lives
And brings *shalom* out of brokenness

Thank you for giving the Holy Spirit
To live in all whose hearts will receive
For the power, comfort and guidance
For the warning, assurance and peace
His living presence brings

Thank you for guiding ordinary persons in history
Through your Holy Spirit
To discern, sort out and choose the collected writings
That would become the final canon—our Bible
Thank you that it comes alive
In every generation and every culture

Thank you for taking us today
Just as we are
Using the raw materials of sinful natures and human frailty
Surrendered to you
Weaving from them usefulness, beauty and wholeness
Salvation's story told again and again

God
Thank you for the Bible
Like the Christ whom it reveals—fully divine, yet fully human
Book of deep mystery and beautiful simplicity
Holding for all time, your inspired eternal truth
Unveiling the "Living Word"—our Savior and Lord

No crib nor a bed for . . .

Our son has no bed. He hasn't had one since almost seven years ago when we finally agreed to extract that piece of furniture from his room.

"Why do I need a bed?" he asked. "A mattress on the floor suits me fine."

His sleeping habits have always been strange. When he was 10 months old he began to crawl out of his crib and sleep on the floor in spite of our repeated efforts to keep him in bed.

During his school years I never knew where I would find him in the morning. Huddled with his dog in a sleeping bag, he might be on a lawn chair, in the hammock or on a picnic table. The only place I objected to was the roof.

This summer he turned 20 and was no longer satisfied with sleeping in the United States.

"I want to sleep on a beach under the stars below the equator," he said as he headed for an island in the Indian Ocean.

Friends and relatives thought it strange that he would head all alone for a destination of isolation with no job or friend waiting. The local police thought he was strange too and did not approve of his nocturnal habits. They were soon searching for "the American who sleeps on the beach." For a while a native provided refuge, but our son soon moved on. Eventually he sent us a postcard from the Philippines. Because of the high crime rate, he realized, his first night of sleeping outdoors could be his last. In the city of Angeles he found lodging for $2 a night—sleeping on a piece of dirty, irregularly shaped foam rubber on the floor. He felt privileged; many others called cardboard boxes or the sidewalk their homes. He stayed until his money ran out a few weeks later.

Arriving in San Francisco with only a few foreign coins, he hitchhiked across the States, sleeping in fields beside the road for as long as 12 hours at a stretch.

Our world traveler is finally home and now has trouble sleeping on his comfortable mattress with sheets and pillow. He dreams of naked children clinging to his legs as he walks down the street. He keeps us awake late into the night.

"If there were a child in this room starving to death, you would sell this house, if you had to, just to get food to keep him or her alive."

Our son never wanted a bed for himself. Now he wants us also to give up our bed. We roll over and pull the covers up about our ears, but we can't shut out the sounds of children crying.

Roberta Mohr

Christmas in the mountains

The snow falls heavily from a dark, gloomy sky. No human dare venture outside. All is quiet. The wind howls through the tall stands of pine. The snow is deep and sparkles with a glow of pure white color. The air is crisp and clean. The windows of the cabin are frosted and they sparkle with an icy crystal glaze. Inside, a fireplace with a small fire burns brightly. It's Christmas Eve and thoughts of the first Christmas enter our hearts. There is reason to celebrate. We have laughter and cheer, and we also have love. We celebrate the mountains and all the wonders that God has created for all of us. But mainly life itself. For we are God's creatures and life begins through him and his love for us.

Tony Jantz

CONTENTS

Christmas is the ultimate communication. God, maker of the universe, becomes an infant. That is a letter difficult to resist. It puts God within a vocabulary all people can understand.

The angels said his coming is for all people. This issue helps us to see Christmas in its larger context. Let's share our rejoicing—Emmanuel!

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Erlene Unruh, Route 2, Box 56A, Newton, KS 67114, wrote her article after attending Seminary on the Plains classes on the history, authority and inspiration of the Bible. We include it because in some circles 1983 was observed as the Year of the Bible. Our hope is that for believers each year is a year of the Bible.

Christmas meditations are by Roberta Mohr, 328 Cherry St., Bluffton, OH 45817; and Tony L. Jantz, 319 S. Ash, McPherson, KS 67460.

An omission was made in the Nov. 22 issue. Emory Wedel, who wrote "Peace and Justice Theme Was Focus," is a Bethel College student who lives at 402 E. 23rd, North Newton, KS 67117.

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EDITORIAL

God's gift is too wonderful for words

"Thank God for his Son—his Gift too wonderful for words" (2 Corinthians 9:15 Living Bible). The RSV talks of "his inexpressible gift"; the KJV calls it "unspeakable."

Human words fail us when we try to express thanks for Jesus' coming among us. The multidimensional (less technical) expressions come at least a bit closer to communicating our depths of gratitude. The beautiful carols, symphonic masterpieces, paintings, poetry, dramas and sculptures are some of the ways we agree that God's Son is an inexpressible gift.

Perhaps that is why at Christmas we seem ready to speak less and sing more, put up more symbolic imagery and listen to the instruments—musical and others.

That may sound OK in general, but there is something in us Christians that needs something more specific to justify all our Christmas activity. Such specifics are there. I'll name only two.

Hope. Malcolm Muggeridge, the famous British media personality, writes of how his agnosticism became melted into a profound faith which he today spreads as zealously as he once criticized.

Muggeridge was in Kiev in the Soviet Union. On an impulse he went to church. He writes, "Never before or since have I participated in such worship. The sense conveyed of turning to God in great affliction was overpowering. Though I could not . . . follow the service, I knew . . . little bits of it: for instance, where the congregation says there is no help for them save for God. What intense feeling they put into these words! In their minds, I knew, as in mine, was a picture of those desolate abandoned villages, of the hunger and the hopelessness, of the cattle trucks being loaded with humans in the dawn light. Where were they to turn for help? Not to the Kremlin. . . . Every possible human agency was found wanting. So only God remained, and to God they turned with a passion, a dedication, a humility impossible to convey" (*Chronicles of Wasted Time*, pp. 258 ff).

Because of Christmas, the light shines even in darkness. No darkness can put it out. In the midst of any despair—tragedy, loneliness, crisis—there is hope.

Yes, it is often impossible for us to describe in words. That tempts us to think it may be small. But when we grasp God's gift of hope, it is too wonderful for words.

Acceptance. George Weber is a would-be writer in a Thomas Wolfe story. He goes to New York City and meets failure upon failure. Totally down on himself, he goes home. There George Weber, a 6-foot-10 giant, kneels beside his mother, puts his head in her lap and sobs and sobs.

No word is spoken for a long time. Then his mother strokes George's head and speaks, "Son, I don't know what's wrong, but whatever it is, it'll be all right."

Paul understood this. He writes, "Accept one another . . . as Christ has accepted us. . ." (Romans 15:7 NEB).

Mennonite preaching often focuses on the community implications of Jesus. He comes among us so that no one needs to conceal handicaps. No group of people has a right to say what's to be done while another group has no say. Neither old nor young are pushed aside. We bear with one another even in times of discord. We cannot celebrate without inviting others to rejoice with us.

God has accepted us just as we are. He is ready to hear and to heal each one who seeks his help.

"We are accepted in Christ so we may accept other people; and the more resolutely we accept other people, the more certain we shall be of our own acceptance in him" (Jürgen Moltmann, *The Power of the Powerless*, p. 106).

Summary. Who can explain the Christ hope and his acceptance? Truly these are too wonderful for words, inexpressible, unspeakable. This Christmas be sure to receive and to share God's gift. He will help you—by his Holy Spirit—to give thanks. *Bernie Wiebe*

**May the joy of Jesus, our Savior,
be with you now and inspire us all
to become ever more faithful disciples.
The Mennonite staff**

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